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# St. Edmund of Canterbury.

By the Rev. William Le Grave.

"Let, then, the Church of Canterbury sing a canticle of Divine praise, because that she has been chosen in these modern times to bring forth two such glorious patrons. The one wears the purple robe of martyrdom, the other, the spotless white of the Christian priesthood. Let the fertile fields of Kent rejoice with great gladness, that from her threshing floor she has sent into God's granary so pure a grain of wheat as Edmund."

The "modern times" here spoken of are now to us the days of the far past, parted by six centuries from the days in which we live; and the words above quoted are those of Pope Innocent the Fourth, written in 1247, in the Bull that proclaimed to the Church the canonization of St. Edmund of Canterbury.

But, though the times have changed, and what we are wont to call the ages of faith have passed by, we shall find as we read the records of St. Edmund's life, that human nature was much the same then as it is to-day. Perhaps we may be struck with some surprise to find that men were struggling then for the same ends that they struggle for now, and that they were perplexed with much the same questions that the nineteenth century still asks, and finds no answer. In the record of this saintly life, lived long ages ago, we may perhaps

find, not only much to admire and venerate, but something for our own guidance and imitation and comfort to-day.

About a century after that great turning-point in English history, the Norman Conquest, there lived, in the quiet town of Abingdon, a married couple named Reginald and Elizabeth Rich.

Their family numbered four—two sons and two daughters—Edmund being the eldest. It is stated that the father, with his wife's consent, retired into a monastery, and in the earliest records of his childhood we find our Saint under his mother's exclusive care.

Mabel was no ordinary mother. She was like the "valiant woman" of Holy Writ, therein declared to be so hard to find, "whose worth is like that of things brought from afar"—who "has girded her loins with strength, and her arm with power, who holds out her hand to the poor and for whose household the snows of winter will bring no terrors."

Her first and foremost care was to fit and endow her children for Heaven. We find her, by example as much as by word, training our young Saint to wage war with evil, to subdue his passions during childhood by acts and habits of self-restraint and practices of asceticism. And well he learned the lesson.

Some few incidents told of his early years stand out like pictures before us, serving to show what manner of child he was, and making us feel that, had he been taken from this world in youth like St. Aloysius or St. Stanislaus Kostka, he would, like them, have left behind him the aromatic odour of heavenly sweetness.

At the scriptural age of twelve years, when the coming life and its responsibilities began to demand his thoughts, we find him, with the approval of his confessor, devoting himself body and soul to the service of God under the patronage of Our Lady. And this is how he did it.

He was at school at Oxford, some four or five miles from his birth place, and at the school which he attended, near to the lecture halls, stood, and stands to-day, the Church of Our Lady. To this church he went

one day to pray, provided with two rings exactly alike, and engraved with the words "Hail Mary." Kneeling before the image of his Queen, he made his vow of consecration to her service.

"To thee, O Virgin of virgins," he began, "most chaste Mother of my Lord, I vow, promise, and devote my virginity. With this ring I pledge thee, I choose thee, and from my heart adopt thee as my Queen and Spouse, so that from this day, I, a virgin, may render to thee, a Virgin, a most seemly and pleasing homage."

While so speaking, he placed one of the rings on the finger of the image, and the other on his own. For some time he continued to pray at the feet of her whom he had chosen for his only love, and, at the close of his prayer, in order to preserve the secret of his sacrifice, he would have withdrawn the ring from the finger of the image. But, try as he would he could not withdraw it, and he was obliged to leave it where he had placed it, taking this as a sign that his offering had been accepted, and his holy espousals ratified in Heaven.

Again we find him, while still a schoolboy, wandering in the fields at Oxford, with his schoolfellows, but retired a little apart from the rest of them; and there he was the beholder of a heavenly vision. Before him stood a child of wonderful beauty, in whose features blended, say the records, the tints of the lily and of the rose, and who hailed the wondering Edmund with the winning salutation "Hail, well-loved one!" Too surprised to utter words, the youthful Saint stood looking at the Child, till the vision spoke again and asked: "Dost thou not know Me?" To the question Edmund answered that he did not remember seeing him before.

"I wonder," the Child went on, "that you do not know Me, seeing that I am your companion at school and wherever you go. Look at My face and read what is written on My forehead." Then, looking, Edmund saw, written in no human hand-writing, "Jesus of Nazareth."

"I am He," the Divine Child continued, "for whose sake you so often afflict yourself, and from whose

generosity alone you expect to be rewarded. Persevere to the end, and all the blessings your mother implores for you shall come to you a hundredfold." Then, signing Edmund on the forehead, the Child told him often to sign himself in the same way with the Sacred Name in memory of Him, and then the vision disappeared.

There are some differences in the manner of relating this vision in the different records, particularly as to the time of its occurrence. It would seem not improbable that though this was the first time such a vision was vouchsafed to him, it was not the last time he was honoured with a vision of the Divine Child. In later life we learn from a certain Bertrand, who was his chamberlain and left a record of his life, that it was Edmund's constant habit to sign himself with the Holy Name on his forehead, and that he taught him, Bertrand, to perform the same pious practice, especially before closing his eyes to sleep, promising a special protection from Heaven if he would do so.

At length the day came for him to quit not only his mother's roof and his mother's care, but his native land as well. The parting scene between mother and sons, for Edmund's brother Richard was to go with him, is carefully recorded for us, and is one of those pictures that vividly portray for us not only that saintly family of the old Berkshire town, but the character of the times in which they lived.

Paris was then the most celebrated school in Europe, —the goal of all scholars who wished to climb the higher branches of the tree of knowledge. From every nation crowds of youths flocked thither, the poor going in as great numbers as the rich, making their way to this centre of the world's culture as best they might, living by the charity of those by whose doors their journey led them.

Edmund and his brother Richard were called to their mother for their parting advice and blessing, and, as they hoped and expected, for the money to defray their journey. For this they held out their hands, and when the sum lay upon Edmund's palm, both brothers looked

at it for a while, and then at each other, in blank dismay, for the sum was wholly inadequate for the purpose. The mother saw their bewilderment for which, probably, she was not unprepared. The words she spoke seem to have reassured them, and that they did so shows the character of mother and sons.

"What good has been all my care of you?" she said; "I am ashamed of your cowardice: where is your trust in God? I look upon every one as a coward who has not banished from his heart all earthly fear. But I will tell you what I will give you over and above this money. I will provide you with two hair shirts, and, if you promise me that you will wear them twice a week, I will promise you, on my part, that God will not leave you in want of the necessaries of life."

So with their hair shirts, a few pence, and their mother's blessing they took their departure for a foreign land. How they fared on the road there is left us no record to tell, but, who that saw Edmund land upon the shores of France, penniless, or nearly so, would have dreamed that the boy was destined one day to hold the highest rank, next to the king's, in his native land? Still less would he have dreamed that, having reached that rank, with the highest honours of Church and State upon him, he would once again land upon those shores of France as homeless and as desolate as even then he landed in his boyhood. Yet, this was the destiny in store for him.

We have already said that the times in which our Saint lived in many ways curiously resembled our own. In spite of its being the age of great faith, the minds of men were filled with a spirit of unrest, and the questions of science, as science was then understood, were debated with a vigour and a zest akin to the keenness with which this century discusses them. There were those who discussed about free-will, the immortality of the soul, and about the existence of God with somewhat perilous freedom and heat. The newly-founded Dominican Order was raised up by God to control, by a happy blending of science and piety, the too rash speculations of independent thinkers. But men were

craving for knowledge in every land, and the title of scholar commanded respect in spite of poverty, or meanness of origin. Then, as now, the Pope was harassed by rebellions and the robbery of his rightful possessions, and bound down by constant dread of the attacks of his enemies, the Emperor Frederick affording a parallel to the King Victor Emmanuel of our century.

A mediæval University was no doubt a very different thing from the modern centres of culture in art and science that we call by the same name. Yet even to-day we may find a sort of survival of the old state of things lingering in what is called the "Quartier Latin" in Paris. It is the students' quarter of the city, where those preparing for professional careers still congregate, and woe to any who interfere with the traditional privileges of their neighbourhood! Any such attempt leads to disturbances of the public peace, not so important as in olden days, but keeping alive the memory of a time when students flocked together to that city from all parts of Europe. They were perilous places both for soul and body, those centres of intellectual activity of St. Edmund's day, where thousands of boys, left almost to their own discretion out of school hours, lived and learned as best they might, unrestrained by the decorum of home or college.

Through this fiery ordeal to will and intellect, to faith and morals, Edmund had to pass: and he went through it unscathed. Prayer and penance were the tonics he used to strengthen himself in the fight with evil, and on the few incidents recorded of his life at this period, none throw a more suggestive light than the gifts sent him by his mother. What was the kind of gift to her absent son that mother's love suggested? A hair shirt. The fact of her sending it would indicate that she at least thought he would use it, and shows more plainly than words the character of mother and son.

In the midst of a career of dazzling success, he was called away home to close that mother's eyes, and do the last sad offices in her behalf. Of the last interview between them a record has been left, telling us how he knelt for her blessing, and how, having received it, he

begged her also to bless in like manner his brother and his sister. But she, with seemingly prophetic instinct, told him that in blessing him she had blessed them, and to his especial care she committed the guardianship of his two sisters. "They have both," she said, "made a vow of their virginity to God, see them safely housed in some haven of peace where the world and its dangers may not come nigh them. In such and such a spot you will find a sum of money wherewith to pay the usual dowry in a monastery, so your task will not be a very hard one."

Then, having thus disposed of all worldly anxieties, if indeed this last anxiety of hers can be called worldly, she looked no more on earth or children, but with eyes uplifted to Heaven prayed to Him who shortly took her to Himself.

But, strangely, the mother's careful provision for her daughters did not lighten the task if her son. To pay money before admission to a convent seemed in his eyes to savour of simony. True, it was that a custom had grown up by degrees, and at last had come to be tolerated, that in view of the poverty of a religious community, it might receive with a new member something wherewith to provide for her maintenance. But the custom did not seem tolerable to Edmund's sensitive conscience. He was bent upon finding some home willing to receive his sisters without any money consideration, and we are told that the search for such a house was long and difficult. A Benedictine monastery at Catesby, in Northamptonshire, had the honour of ending his search, for there he at last found a superioress willing to receive his charges without any stipulation as to dowry. There he accordingly left them, and, having carefully fulfilled a brother's part, he went back once more to Paris to continue his studies.

His degree taken with the highest honours, it was the universal practice in those days that he should make practical use of his title of master, and take upon himself the function of teaching. Of his career in the office of professor at Paris we know but little. This much we know, that it was his custom to go to Matins at midnight

and spend the remainder of the night at prayer in the Church of St. Merri, before the altar of the Mother of God. How long he remained teaching in Paris is also uncertain, but, his fame having reached his native land, he was probably pressed to accept the same office in Oxford, where we next find him lecturing.

His advent to that reverend city of letters was an epoch-marking event. Many no doubt had studied and taught there with success and fame, and great was its renown when he went there. But he went not merely as a ripe scholar to undertake an ordinary office extraordinarily well, nor merely as a master from the then centre of the world of letters to infuse new life and spirit into Oxford. He was destined to make his mark there as the founder of a new curriculum, an altogether new course of studies, by the introduction of Aristotle and the scholastic method. His influence has not passed away completely to the present day. It is said that he was the first at that University who held the title of Master of Arts, and that his contagious enthusiasm for learning changed into a noble thirst for knowledge the previous mercenary desire of knowledge merely for its market value ; so that subjects hitherto neglected because they were not lucrative were now taken up for pure love of wisdom. The arts and sciences, such as law, civil and canonical, had hitherto been cultivated at the expense of other branches, simply because to know them was a ready means to obtain a livelihood. But our Saint, by the enthusiasm of his lectures, and still more by a noble example of disinterestedness, changed this spirit of studying for lucre into a zeal for knowledge itself. We read, for example, how, when his pupils would bring him the customary stipend for tuition, he would carry it to the sill of his window and smilingly sprinkle over it a little dust, saying "ashes to ashes, and dust to dust," and so leave the coins to the mercy of some passer-by. This was a very practical way of showing how little he cared for the emoluments of learning compared with learning itself, and thus he brought about a change in the spirit of the schools which words alone would scarcely have wrought.

It would seem that he remained at this work for some six years, gaining in that time a wide reputation for learning and sanctity, and then God called him to still higher things.

One night he had drawn some mathematical figures and was intent upon solving by their aid some mathematical problem. While so engaged, his mother appeared to him in a vision. "What my son," she asked, "are you doing with those figures on which you look with such absorbing interest?" He replied that it was his work, and explained to her the nature of his studies. Taking his hand; his mother drew thereon three circles in which she wrote the names of the three Divine Persons, saying: "These, my dearest son, are the only figures to which you must from this time forth devote yourself."

Regarding this as an intimation of the Divine Will, Edmund resolved to begin a course of theology, which he had not yet studied, and he soon found in the highest of sciences a pursuit even more fascinating and absorbing than those to which he had hitherto devoted himself.

But, while we must recognize that theology was a higher and holier study than the science of figures and numbers, on which he had up to this been engaged, we cannot help reflecting how well and worthily he must have worked at those secular sciences to deserve from Heaven the light of a vision inviting him to other nobler studies. In his humility he had chosen a low place in the house of his Master, and that Master had sweetly invited him, "Friend, go up higher." Happy are they who so use earthly things as to win thereby eternal!

There are good reasons* for supposing that, after

* These reasons are fully adduced in the admirable life of the Saint by Father Wilfrid Wallace, O.S.B., published in 1893. To this learned Father all writers on the life of St. Edmund owe a deep debt. He has not only collected together the chief records on the life of the Saint, but he has published in full the text of many important and interesting documents, not easily accessible, bearing on the life of St. Edmund. He has, moreover, with much skill, filled up gaps as to dates and other matters, giving for his conjectures reasons of great force.

his mind was made up to go forward to the priesthood, St. Edmund left Oxford and went back once more to Paris to enter on his theological studies, and that he stayed there for this purpose some three or four years. Where and when he was ordained no one has told us; but we are told that his humility still made him fear the final step to the altar, and that he only took that step under compulsion.

After ordination he went to a convent of Augustinians at Merton, where he spent a year in retirement and prayer, going through all the religious exercises of the community as if he had been one of themselves, and edifying all by the earnestness of his devotion. Then he returned to Oxford and began lecturing on theology. If he had previously led his pupils to heavenly thoughts, as we are told he did, by means of the science of numbers and the subtleties of logic, how much more must he have led the minds of his hearers heavenwards when the science of theology was his theme!

The author of the *Following of Christ* says: "I would rather feel contrition than know its definition," for undoubtedly, the technical enquiry into the things even of Heaven may have a tendency sometimes to drain dry the well of devotion. But St. Edmund was quite aware of this lurking danger, and was well upon his guard against it. So from time to time he would withdraw from the circle of his students, and his professor's chair, and go forth to labour in a different part of his Master's vineyard, among the poor and the ignorant. Accepting for the time being some benefice or post in a country district, where he might do his work far removed from the praise of men, and free from all risks of vanity, he would exercise his priestly office to the untold good of those among whom he laboured, as well as to his own sanctification.

But while he filled the master's chair, there was little danger of any of his disciples losing the substance of virtue and devotion in the pursuit of their shadow—their definitions. On one occasion while he was lecturing, we read how a certain abbot came in and listened till the lecture was ended. Then as he was about to go, no less

than seven of the auditors went up to him and begged to be admitted as postulants for his community. During the lecture they had felt themselves called to a religious life by the words the Saint had spoken, and the coming in of the abbot had seemed to them an intimation of the Divine Will in their regard, giving them an opportunity of carrying out their holy impulse. They had evidently learnt from their master not only how to define contrition but also to feel it.

It was not likely that one so famous for piety as well as learning should not be marked out by his superiors for a still higher position than that of theological lecturer. His services were needed in a yet wider sphere of activity. We next find him Canon and treasurer at Salisbury. Somewhat oddly, the name of the Bishop of Salisbury at that time was Poor, while St. Edmund's family name was Rich. In their worldly possessions their names were exactly reversed, for while the Bishop had abundant wealth, his treasurer seems always to have been in money troubles and debts, for to manage money or keep it was utterly beyond him. The needy, and the beauty of God's altars, seem to have emptied his purse as soon as filled, however ample his sources of income might be. We know that, though during his residence at Salisbury his income was large, he managed to get through it each year long before the year's end, and generally to run into considerable debt beside.

As treasurer, it was his place to find all the requisites for Divine service in the Cathedral, and the munificence with which he did this long remained an honourable tradition in the city. He was one who "loved the beauty of God's House and the place where His glory dwelleth," and the tradition lingered long after him that things ought to be carried out as carefully and as generously in the Cathedral as in the days when "Master" Edmund was treasurer. In his time the splendid edifice was hardly complete, and the canons had voted a quarter of their stipends for a certain number of years that it might be finished and paid for; so that with the duties of his office and the unfinished

state of the Cathedral, Edmund had abundant opportunity, in which he delighted, of spending and being spent in the service of his Heavenly Master.

At this time all Europe was filled with consternation at the progress of Mahometanism. The Holy Land was in the hands of the infidel, the abomination of desolation was standing in the Holy Place, and all Christendom was alive to the disgrace of this. Popes and Bishops and kings were eager that something should be done to remove the danger and disgrace, and Gregory took up the cause of Faith and ordered the preaching of a crusade throughout the world. Among those selected for this office in England was our Saint, who received the Papal commission to preach it in a district stretching from Somerset to Oxford. Owing to many causes this Crusade did not prove the success hoped; but it is said that some fifty thousand persons were so moved by Edmund's preaching that they joined the standard of the Cross. The power of his words was reinforced by the power of miracles which he wrought as he went on his errand from place to place. On several occasions we read how the winds and the storms obeyed his voice, sparing his gathered audience in the fields, though flooding the country immediately round them.

Another of the miracles with which his words were confirmed, like those of the Apostles, "by the signs that followed," was one worked in the case of a young woman miraculously struck with paralysis while he was preaching, and then cured by his prayers. The Saint was exhorting his hearers to take the cross. This meant devoting one's self with heart and soul to the cause of faith, to join the battle against unbelief according to one's circumstances and position. The preaching of the crusade was addressed not only to men capable of taking up arms and going to the Holy Land in the cause, it was addressed to all. Those who could not do this, pledged themselves to help according to their power by prayer, fasting, and almsdeeds. For was it not a punishment for the sins of Christians that the holy city of Jerusalem should be thus robbed from them, and

that the victorious Turk should be threatening to overrun Christendom? So the first step to change this sad state of things was clearly to go to the root of the evil, and purify the Christian world by the works of penance. In this work, woman as well as man, young and old, weak and strong, were invited to take their part.

Those who pledged themselves to the holy cause took into their hands, or wore, the sign of our Redemption. While Edmund was preaching, a young man held out his hand to take the cross, and a young woman by his side plucked at his cloak to hinder him from his purpose. Her hand was paralysed in the act. Her cries of alarm attracted the attention of the crowd and of the Saint. Fear was in her case the beginning of wisdom. She bewailed her selfishness in striving to hinder the spiritual good of her neighbour, and to Edmund's question whether she herself would now be willing to take the cross, she answered that she would. The very promise brought back the lost power to her arm, and the event produced a powerful impression on those that witnessed it.

The great variety of St. Edmund's occupations during his priesthood may perhaps surprise us when we think how true is the saying in the *Following of Christ*—"Qui multo peregrinantur raro sanctificantur"—"they who wander much about, seldom arrive at perfection." But, true as the rule generally is, we find a conspicuous exception here. The great majority of saints have won their crown engaged in some special kind of work in their Master's service, and St. Edmund is found sometimes teaching, sometimes in the retirement of cloisters, sometimes working, as we should now say, "on the mission." Yet the exception is more apparent than real. In all this diversity of occupations we may detect the one underlying speciality of his vocation. He was always and everywhere a teacher. He was this from first to last, and his lessons bore rich fruit. He taught not only when multitudes flocked to listen to his words, or when he charmed his hearers by his sermons. It was the example of his life that taught more eloquently than

words. As lecturer in science and art at Oxford, he educated and trained those who would be able worthily to take his place, and then his task at Oxford was finished.

He went to Salisbury, and there, in the spirit of St. Osmund, who had won his crown as bishop of that see, he so contrived the decorous and majestic celebration of the sacred services, that for long afterwards his rules and practice were the standard held up for imitation. When he had taught this lesson, and instilled his spirit into others, his work here was accomplished.

Later on, he was called, like St. John, to preach the baptism of penance for the extirpation of sin, to combat like him the vice of hypocrisy in those who, professing the Christian name, denied it by the manner of their lives. Like St. John, he urged and reinforced his words with the example of his own austerity, wearing like him rough raiment, and living on food little better than locusts and wild honey. We may perhaps find a still closer parallel between St. John and our Saint. Both had their years of silent preparation for their work, and both preached not only to the multitude, but stood up manfully before a king, and spoke when fear kept others silent, and said, "It is unlawful for thee to do this." Sometimes he taught one lesson, sometimes another, but he was always teaching.

Father Wilfrid Wallace has made a beautiful comparison between the course of St. Edmund's life and that of the river Thames, by whose margin he was born, and by whose banks at Westminster so many of his later labours were undergone.

"Past the little town Abingdon," he writes, "flows the placid Thames. Its unimpeded current meanders smoothly between pleasant pastures tenanted by lowing herds, dotted here and there with peaceful homesteads; its banks are fringed at times with poplars and willows and waving rushes. Its clear sparkling waters know of no commotion, save the ripple caused by the passing breeze, or the rising of the finny tribe to catch the

fleeting prey. But let us follow the silver Thames some fifty miles, and what shall we see? It is now a majestic river swollen with scores of tributaries: it pours a mighty flood past populous cities and the vast capital of the empire. Its banks are now lined with colossal structures destined to carry on the trade and commerce of that empire; it bears on its ample breast argosies freighted with the wealth of nations. Its course is no longer smooth and unimpeded, for it has to encounter the still more mighty reflex of the imperious ocean, to which it has to yield as it is borne back upon itself. Its waters are no longer clear and sparkling, for they are charged with the offscourings of millions."

Do we not see in all this an apt representation of the fortunes of our Saint?

"Cradled in the quiet town of Abingdon, his life had been spent in studious retirement, and devout contemplation; and now, after fifty years thus spent, he is all at once plunged into the vortex of tumultuous politics. He is charged with the spiritual destinies of a whole nation; he is placed at the head of those venerable churches, whose prelates, as his suffragans, are, as it were, tributaries to his greatness. But he is no longer able to pursue the calm and serene tenor of his former life; he has to encounter the overbearing power of the crown, the fierce resistance of the barons, bent on the gratification of their ignoble pleasures; he has to bear in his bosom the sins of the people. No wonder, then, if he is borne back upon himself, if he goes to lay his weary head and broken heart in the the peaceful cloisters of Pontigny." (*Life of St. Edmund*, chap. x.)

From the peaceful home at Abingdon we have traced him through a career of growing fame for learning and for holiness, and now we must follow him in the final stage of his earthly pilgrimage as bishop of the Metropolitan See of Canterbury.

The days were wild and stormy in England as elsewhere. Ever since the Norman Conquest, some hundred and fifty years before, gave the land of England to a stranger, she had been harassed and impoverished by war after war. For nearly a century the conquering

race had looked down upon the conquered with scorn. Its language and manners were regarded as barbarian. But, in course of time, it came to pass that the Norman race began to change their notions. The Anglo-Saxon spirit of freedom made itself respected, admired, and at last imitated, till by the end of a century after the Conquest the conquerors made it, as Mr. Freeman tells us, their proudest boast that they were Englishmen. Then they too began to claim that liberty and security for life and property that had been the proud boast of the Anglo-Saxons, and were summed up in the "Laws of good King Edward."

For freedom and justice, both spiritual and temporal, barons and bishops had stood together in the reign of King John. The Great Charter, the charter of our liberties to-day, was the result of their combination. But though the Charter had been signed, its privileges were not yet secure; evasion after evasion on the part of kings long kept the kingdom in a state of distraction. The Norman kings, with a view to gain support against their discontented subjects, were prone to invite foreign nobles to their courts, and foreign ecclesiastics to fill the English bishoprics. Hence jealousy of the foreigner rose to a great height and kindled general dissatisfaction. The English nobles were clamouring for greater power in the councils of the king, the Church for greater freedom in the election of bishops. It was not only that kings wanted to control the election of bishops so as to have the election practically in their own hands, but they wished to delay the election at will, so as to enjoy as long as they dared the revenues of the vacant see. This was the real root of centuries of trouble.

In the time of William Rufus the conflict may be said to have begun. On the death of Archbishop Lanfranc the see of Canterbury lay vacant till a fit of illness frightened the king and made him hastily consent to the election of St. Anselm.* But no sooner did he recover than he found himself face to face with an opponent "whose meek and loving temper rose into firmness

* See *St. Anselm*, by Mrs. Ward. Catholic Truth Society, price 1d.

and grandeur when it confronted the tyranny of the king," as Mr. Green says in his *Short History of the English People.*

As an indication of the state of things against which he fought, we read that at the death of this king, William Rufus, there were vacant one archbishopric, four bishoprics and eleven abbacies.

There were many points of similarity between St. Anselm and St. Edmund. Both were world-famed students and teachers. Both were summoned from their books and retirement all of a sudden to hold the same archiepiscopal see. Both waged the same contest against kings, both retired into voluntary exile, to fight by prayer and penance the battle that it seemed hopeless to wage with other weapons.

The fight for the self-same cause, the liberty of religion, and the freedom of episcopal election, was again fought after St. Anselm's day by St. Thomas. He too fled from the hopeless struggle, and, though he consented to return, it was only to find the martyr's crown awaiting him.

The election to the see of Canterbury was by right a privilege of the Benedictine Chapter of that city, but they were only able to exercise that privilege with the previous consent of the king.

In 1231, the see being vacant, the Chapter elected Ralph Neville, Bishop of Chichester. The election was set aside by the Holy See. Henry the Third, who was then King of England, seems to have taken the Pope's decision in bad part; however, a second election was made, but again the Holy See set the choice aside on account of the age of the bishop-elect. A third election met with the same fate.

The Pope now took the election into his own hands, and, after due enquiries from the bishops of England and others, he nominated St. Edmund. The Chapter expressed themselves perfectly satisfied with the Pope's choice, and elected St. Edmund unanimously as their own candidate.

Great was the Saint's surprise, and deep was his reluctance to accept the dignity. When some monks

came from Canterbury to Salisbury to tell him the honour which had been done him, he simply did not believe it possible; and when his attendant came to his room to announce the visitors and their errand, he called him a simpleton for dreaming of such a thing. But when the monks on their knees implored him not to refuse their prayer, and when his fellow canons added their entreaties, and urged that the peace and religion of the nation would be endangered by his refusal, the responsibility of refusing seemed as great as the responsibility of accepting the dignity, and he accepted the mitre in these words:—"He that knows all things knows that I would never consent to this election unless I thought that I should sin mortally by refusing it."

He had now embarked on a stormy sea. Before his very consecration, as bishop-elect, he was compelled to attend a parliament to present a remonstrance to the King! A stern and sad duty must this have been to one so full of gentle kindness—a gloomy foreboding of what fate had in store for him.

A slight truce followed after this, while the Saint was preparing for consecration. At this ceremony the King himself was present, with nearly all the bishops of England, and some from Ireland.

Henry was a strange mixture of weakness and obstinacy, of piety and covetousness. He is said to have heard three High Masses every day. He seems to have written to St. Louis of France, his contemporary, on spiritual subjects, for St. Louis was of opinion, as he wrote in a letter, that Henry might profit more by hearing more sermons and fewer Masses; to which Henry replied that he preferred seeing his friend to hearing him spoken of. All the same, a little solid instruction on his duties to God and man might not have been superfluous.

In the beginning, it must be admitted, the King seems to have listened to the voice of his new Archbishop with surprising respect and gentleness: surprising, because, as we have seen, the Saint's first official act was to present, in common with the other peers, a strong remonstrance against his conduct of affairs. This was

before Edmund's consecration, and within a week of that solemn function, he was again at the head of the prelates and barons for the same purpose. Nay, on this occasion he felt it his duty even to threaten the King with excommunication unless he did justice to his people. Yet soon afterwards we read of his begging the King's mercy for an outlawed nobleman with such success, that the monarch with a smile said to him: "How well you know how to pray! Pray like that to God for me, and I make no doubt, as God is more merciful than I, that He will graciously hear you. I grant your petition." Nothing could show better the tact and gentleness of the Saint, or the mixed character of the King, than this scene.

Of St. Edmund's private life as a bishop, what need be said? He led the life that every saint has led, a life of humility, penance and prayer. It is recorded of him, as a wonder, that he went about his province personally; never delegating the duty to others; that he dispensed as far as it was possible, with the services of attendants, performing for himself many offices that his rank entitled him to expect from the willing and eager hands of others, and that he would readily alight from his horse, when going a journey, to hear the confessions of such as wished to make them to him. At any hour of the day or night he would put himself at the disposal of the weak, the poor and sorrowful.

By the law of the land he was entitled to what were called "heriots." That means that, on the death of the head of a family living on his episcopal estate, he was allowed to choose the best beast on the farm. This law he looked on as cruel and unjust, but still it was the law, and while it was so, he did not see his way to treat it with contempt. So, when a poor widow would come to beg for relief, from this custom he managed to get over the difficulty in a way of his own. He would select the beast and then return it to her on loan, saying, "I will lend you the animal until I want it, if you will promise to take good care of it for me." As repayment of the loan was seldom demanded, the law was upheld, and the poor were satisfied.

Not long after his consecration, he was called on to solemnize the King's marriage with Eleanor of Provence. The ceremony took place with all splendour and pomp in Westminster Abbey. Instead of cementing the union between King and prelate, this event seems to have been the beginning of an enduring estrangement. The new Queen brought with her a number of foreigners who sought and found advancement at the English Court. Hence the old standing grievance, of the King's partiality for strangers, which he had over and over again promised to redress, came with fresh force between him and his subjects, and from the date of his marriage, it was observed that the monarch looked at the Archbishop in the light of an opponent.

The year of the marriage did not pass away without repeated protests by parliament against the exclusive promotion of foreigners. During his minority, Henry had granted a charter redressing many grievances. Now, he found it inconvenient to keep his word, and resolved to break it. He wrote to the Pope on the subject, and asked his advice in such a way as to secure the answer he desired. He explained to the Pope that at his coronation he had sworn to maintain the rights of the crown, that in his youth he had signed a charter violating those rights, that he felt scrupulous on the point, and what ought he to do? The Pope wrote back as the King had hoped, and naturally told him he ought to keep his coronation oath. So Henry revoked the charter. This naturally raised a storm.

At the same time he began the old conflict with the Church, for whose liberties St. Thomas had died. Appeals from all sides went to Rome, with the result that the puzzled Pope sent a Legate to England.

This was exactly what the King had wished and asked. He knew the Pope to be in dire straits, and hoped he would side with him rather than add another to the list of his foes in the King of England. He resolved to play the Legate against the Archbishop, and his scheme, in great measure succeeded. From the hour of the Legate's arrival, all the Saint's efforts to restore order and peace in his province were frustrated by constant appeals against his decisions.

The Legate saw the evils that existed, but he was in a delicate position; his instructions were to conciliate the King as far as might be; and he probably feared that too violent a rooting out of the cockle might mean the rooting out of much good wheat as well.

St. Edmund fretted at the sight of so many evils he was powerless to attack. All his efforts to procure justice from the King for his flock were vain. The reform of abuses was delayed by interminable law suits and appeals which, even when he gained his cause, left him impoverished; he found himself with the highest ecclesiastical rank in the kingdom, but in all except the title a mere cypher.

Broken down in health, the revenues of his see almost bankrupt, all the reforms of his province, on which he had set his heart, bitterly opposed by powerful obstruction, many of his own children siding with the stronger side, he felt that all hope of stemming the tide was gone. How desperate the state of affairs was, may be gathered from the words of Richard, Earl of Cornwall, the King's brother, spoken at a Synod held at Reading. The Earl had made up his mind to join the Crusade, and had come to take leave of the assembled bishops. They begged him not to leave the country while in such a pitiable state. Richard, addressing the Archbishop, said: "My father and Lord, even if I had not taken the cross, I should still have to leave the country, when I see the desolation to which it is brought; especially as many seem to share your opinion, and think that I might do something, whereas I can do nothing."

In this state of desolation, the Archbishop's thoughts would naturally turn back to those who had preceded him in the See, and who had fought the same battle. Anselm and Thomas, brave as they were, and Saints as they were, had fled. Could he do better than follow their example?

But all doubt and hesitation were ended by a guiding voice from Heaven as he prayed for light. "Trust what is written round the edge of thy seal, and follow the example of him whose likeness is there engraved." The seal bore the words "Ut Edmundum doceat mors mea

ne timeat—Let my death teach Edmund not to fear"—and the engraving was the death of St. Thomas.

It is also related that St. Thomas afterwards appeared to him and exhorted him to be brave. Edmund would have kissed the martyr's feet, but he prevented him, saying: "Nay, but the time approaches when you shall kiss me on the face." Yet another vision is recorded in which St. Thomas showed him the wounds in his head, and made him lay his hand on them. Thus encouraged, Edmund henceforth made his Master's prayer continually his own: "Father, not my will, but Thine be done." He would also often repeat the words of Job: "As it hath pleased the Lord, so be it done to me: blessed be the name of the Lord!"

When he felt that the time had come, he bethought him of the cloisters of Pontigny, which had sheltered St. Thomas in like straits, and once more crossed over to that land, to which he had gone forth as a boy from his mother's roof, scarcely poorer then than now, and trusting now, as then, only to Heaven for strength and help.

The King of France was then a boy, under the guardianship of his mother, Blanche, but he was destined to live in history, sacred and profane, as France's greatest king, as St. Louis of France. Both he and his mother came to welcome the Saint to their shores, and offered him the hospitality of the court. But of courts, Edmund had had enough; the heavenly courts were the only ones for which he longed, and the peace of a cloister was the haven of rest, for to gain which, he had fled from the archiepiscopal throne.

The Cistercian monks received him at Pontigny with all the honour and reverence due to his dignity. Here he went about, exercising among the poor the office of a good shepherd, preaching and hearing confessions, and healing not only their spiritual, but even their bodily ailments.

But the end was not far off. Austerity and anxiety had wrecked his frame, and the physician ordered a change of air. So he set out for Soisy, a town some sixty miles away. The good monks, who had learned

to love him deeply by this time, were heart-broken at his going. "Why, O father, do you leave us?" they cried; "who will take care of us while you are away? Surely some sin of ours has merited this loss!" Almost in these words spoke the disciples of the great St. Martin, in reply to which he turned to God and prayed thus: "Lord, if I am still necessary to this flock, I do not refuse the burden of life." St. Edmund prophetically promised to return to them on the feast of St. Edmund, King and Martyr, which he did, but not as they hoped. His body was brought back to them on that day to be the treasure of their house for centuries. "Precious in the sight of God is the death of His Saints," and precious are the last words and acts of their life to those who reverence them, trifling though they may seem.

We are told that when he found the end was near, he begged that his hair-shirt might be destroyed so as to conceal his penance, but that all efforts to destroy it were vain. During his mortal sickness he never rested on a bed. Once they brought him some delicacy, but he put it by, saying, "Such like things have seldom passed my lips." Before receiving the Holy Viaticum he exclaimed: "Thou, O Lord, art my portion, whom I have loved, whom I have preached and taught. Thou art my witness that I have sought nothing on earth but Thee alone."

After Extreme Unction, he washed the crucifix in wine and water, and drinking the liquid he said: "Thou shalt draw water with joy out of the Saviour's fountains," and after that he never drank again. His last words were spoken at dawn on November 16th, 1240, and were the words of the Psalmist: "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." According to his last request, his body was at once removed to Pontigny for burial. The cortège, we read, was more like a triumphal procession than a funeral. The roadway became blocked by the throngs anxious to touch the body, and as the sick, in many cases recovered their health by doing so, the block became daily greater. A curious incident is told which pictures the state of things during this memorable funeral better than words. The Abbot of Pontigny

came to meet the procession. When he saw the throngs he began to fear that the sacred remains would never be got to his monastery, so he addressed the body of the Saint as if he were still living. "My good Father," he said, "as a brother of my community, you owe me obedience. I speak to you with confidence. I am your abbot, and you are my monk. I beg of you not to work any more miracles till you reach your final resting-place." The record does not say whether the miracles then ceased, but the incident shows the estimation in which the Saint was held.

On the feast of St. Edmund, King and Martyr, the other Edmund's promise was fulfilled. He came back to Pontigny, where his holy body still remains. Thereby another Saint's promise was kept, for St. Thomas, when leaving their house, having no means to repay their generous hospitality, had promised that one of his successors would one day repay his debt. The repayment was amply made when Edmund gave his relics to be the glory and the light of their house.

"His tomb was glorious," and of those who had most bitterly opposed him in life, not a few came to pay homage at his grave, among them the King of England. Prelates of many lands began to petition for his canonization, and on the third Sunday of Advent, 1246, only a few years after his death, his name was placed by the Church on the roll of her canonized Saints.

# Augustus Henry Law,

## SAILOR AND JESUIT

(1833-1880.)

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We live in days in which it is commonly said that the age of Saints, even as the age of miracles and of chivalry, is passed. And yet the Holy See is ever busy in raising fresh *Beati* to our altars; the "causes" of other great servants of God are constantly being investigated and promoted; and the lives of holy men and women, many of them our contemporaries, are daily coming to light, proving, if proof be necessary, that the note of holiness is as true of the Church to-day as ever. Such a life it is of which we now attempt a short sketch.*

Augustus Henry Law was born on the 21st of October, 1833, at Trumpington, a village near Cambridge. His father, a clergyman of the Church of England, and his mother were both truly religious, and devoted themselves to the education of their children. Their home at East Brent, in Somersetshire, was an ideal one, and we can trace its wholesome influence throughout the life of Augustus. As a boy, he showed great aptitude

* This sketch is based on a "Memoir of Fr. Law," by his father (3 vols.); "Life of Fr. Law," by Ellis Schreiber (Quarterly Series); and "Notes in Remembrance, and last Relics of Augustus Law, S.J.," by Fr. Matthew Russell, S.J.

and diligence in his studies, and his character developed rapidly. He was very full of fun, warm-hearted, and thoughtful for others, while his devotion to his mother knew no bounds. He was, however, soon to lose her. In October, 1844, Augusta, the eighth child, was born, and though at first all went well with both mother and child, a sudden change occurred, and she sank rapidly. Her death was most edifying and in harmony with her life, characterized, as it was, by thought for the children she was leaving and by resignation to the will of God. For Augustus especially, she had words of parting advice, and these he never forgot. "Throughout your life," she said to him, "never forget these words: 'Thou, God, seest me' (Gen. xvi. 13)." Their home was naturally broken up by this sad event. Mr. Law went to reside at Wells, of which he was Chancellor, and the boys returned to their school, distant but a few miles from their former home.

And here an extract from a remarkable meditation written by Augustus before he was twelve years old, may fittingly be inserted. It is quite original, and shows how, thus early in life, the grace of God was doing its work in his soul. "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ (2 Cor. v. 10)," is the text on which it is based. He writes: "That day will be an *awful* one, when our Blessed Lord comes down to judge us. Every one will have to give an account of his deeds, whether good or evil. Some will be doomed to eternal destruction, and go with the devil and his wicked angels to Hell, others will go with our Blessed Saviour to Heaven, where they will live in eternal life for ever and ever. Everyone will receive his due. People cannot think too much of that awful day. Some profligate people pass their time on earth in dissipation and folly, forgetting that on that day they will have to give an account of all things done in the body, whether good or evil. On the other hand, others always bear in mind that they have to give an account of themselves on the judgment day, and have set their affections on things above, and not on things of the earth, always calling upon the name of the Lord and following His

blessed steps. Then, oh try, you who wish to live in Heaven with our Blessed Lord, to follow Christ's example, and then you may be sure you will live in Heaven in bliss and happiness; and recollect above all things that we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ."

In the autumn of 1845, Mr. Law accepted the living of Harborne, near Birmingham, and on the way back to school, after the Christmas holidays, Augustus spent a few days in London on a visit to his uncle, Lord Ellenborough, then first Lord of the Admiralty. This chance visit proved a turning point in his life. Lord Ellenborough was immensely taken with his nephew, and at once wrote to Mr. Law proposing that that "fine eldest boy" of his should be a sailor. Mr. Law heartily approved of the plan and laid it before Augustus, who in turn, gladly gave his consent, though he had strong leanings towards the Church as his profession. The conclusion of his letter, in answer to his father, is very characteristic: "Will you thank Lord Ellenborough for me," he writes, "for having given me such a jolly chance? Will you tell me how many guns the ship has got? Recollect I can't swim." He was at once appointed to H.M.S. *Carysfort*, bound for the Cape, and having bravely bid adieu to all his friends at home, started on his first voyage in March, 1846.

He had characteristically determined to devote his whole energies to being a good sailor, and soon found the life congenial to his tastes. Writing from the Cape, he says: "I have now been three months in Her Majesty's service, and I must say I like the Navy very much. I don't think there is anyone in the ship happier than me." His superiors as well as his companions soon formed a high opinion of him, saying "he promised to be an ornament to his profession." This voyage took him to Sydney, New Zealand, and Valparaiso, and it was not till November, 1847, that the *Carysfort* was homeward bound. "Hurrah!! Hurrah!!!" writes Augustus; "I am not going to write a long letter, for about three or four weeks after you get this letter I hope to see you. How jolly it will be when we anchor at Spit-

head! I hope God may preserve me in health and safety till I get home to see you, dearest Papa." Throughout the voyage, Augustus had been an excellent correspondent. His letters are bright and cheery, and a little message for all at home is to be found in each. Moreover, he kept a "capital diary," as he called it, and illustrated it profusely with sketches.

Only a short holiday was in store for him on his return, for he was at once appointed to H.M.S. *Hastings*, which was to sail on July 1st for the East Indies. This was in 1848, and not till April, 1852, would he again set foot on England's shore. Their chief halting-places during these four years were Hong-Kong and Singapore, neither of which pleased Augustus overmuch. Moreover, he was not so much at home on the *Hastings* as he had been on the *Carysfort*, and in 1851 effected his exchange to the *Amazon*, due home in October, 1852. Still he was fortunate enough to meet with good companions on the *Hastings*, and again won golden opinions from his superior officers. During this voyage his religious mind and tastes developed considerably. He had a great liking for reading and listening to sermons, and it was his custom to make a note of the text of every sermon he heard and to sketch it in outline. The observance of Sunday on board the *Hastings* was lax, and disgusted Augustus very much, especially when the sermon was ordered to be omitted, as was not unfrequently the case. "I spent a most unsatisfactory Sunday," he once notes in his diary; "it was certainly *worthy* of the *Hastings*." Two short entries from the diary made while on this voyage may here find a place, as showing the deep seriousness of Augustus' disposition, and his insight into the real end of life.

"*Nov. 9th*, 1850. Prince of Wales' ninth birthday. I remember hearing the news of his birth in 1841. What lots of things have happened since then. School days over, joined the navy: my poor, dear, kind mother dead. My father changed his living, married again. Who could have guessed all this nine years ago? Who could possibly have known that all these things would

have happened but God? Yes, God has taken care of me and has had mercy on me ever since, and yet I have not been thankful to Him for all His blessings. O, most merciful God, have mercy upon me still, but make me more thankful. Bless the young prince and enrich him with Thy choicest blessings both now and for ever." The second extract is dated Oct. 21st, 1850, his seventeenth birthday. "May God give me grace to begin this eighteenth year of my life, go through it, and end it, in His fear. May I constantly remember that God's all-seeing eye is on me at all times; may I keep my heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

Before Augustus returned home, an important event occurred in his family which must here be briefly noted. His father was received into the Catholic Church on September 19th, 1851. For some time previous he had had grave doubts as to the truth of the Anglican Church, and the decision in the famous Gorham case decided the matter for him, as it did for so many others. He had kept his son *au courant* of his state of mind, and announced his reception to him in these words: "You will not be surprised to hear that I have at length resigned my preferment in the English Church, and have been received into the *One*, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. And, first, I must tell you (or rather I cannot tell you, for words cannot express) the peace of mind, and comfort, and lightness of heart I have experienced and am experiencing. I am thoroughly happy, and more so than I have ever been."

It was but natural that Mr. Law should wish his children to share his happiness, and he therefore sent some books and pamphlets bearing on the Church to his son. Providentially, Augustus had leisure to read them, owing to an unforeseen delay at Singapore, and at once they made a deep impression on his candid mind. Writing to his father, he says: "I am very glad, dearest father, that you are so happy. May God bless you for ever and ever." His diary shows us how diligently he searched for the truth, and how he made the whole

matter a subject of constant prayer. "Almighty God, I pray Thee to give me a quiet mind, and to resolve my doubts concerning the true religion. Lead me to the truth, let me henceforth lead a new life."

Throughout the voyage home, Augustus spent his leisure-time in reading books on the Faith. With Cardinal Wiseman's *Lectures on the Church* he was especially struck, reading them more than once. On arriving at Spithead, April, 1852, he heard that all his brothers and sisters, with one exception, were already Catholics, and was welcomed by one of the latter with a letter speaking of her happiness, and saying: "I hope and pray, my darling brother, that you also will soon be received as one of the members of the Holy Catholic Church." Indeed, Augustus was practically such already. The light had dawned, and prejudices had been removed, and on May 16th, scarce three weeks after his arrival, he was received into the Church by Dr. Grant, then Bishop of Southwark, who also comfirmed him on the 30th of the same month. He had made his First Communion a week previous at Oscott, taking St. Aloysius as his special patron. From the first he seems to have imbibed (most wonderfully) Catholic instincts and ideas. To be present at Holy Mass at once became a part of his daily duties, and the functions and Liturgy of the Church possessed the greatest attraction for him.

He was soon afloat again, on board the *Encounter*, and in July, 1852, was at Lisbon, where he delighted the Professors of the English College by his genuine piety and simplicity. By September, however, he was back in England, having been "*lent* to the *Excellent* till further orders." This vessel proved to be his last, and his career in the navy was now drawing to a close. Already in his heart the desire was strong to devote himself wholly to the service of God: he longed to be a priest and to work for souls, and acted in the matter in a most thorough and business-like way. No traces of hurry or recklessness are to be met with, but rather, much prayer, thought, and obedience to good direction. He felt a great drawing to the Redemptorists, and made a retreat at their house at Clapham in the March of

1853, as the result of which he drew up for his guidance the following rule of life:

*A Short Rule of Life for the "Excellent."*

"6.30, rise and dress, not forgetting to make the sign of the Cross directly I awake, and let the first words uttered be 'Jesus, Mary.' Offer myself and all that belongs to me to God, and make acts of faith, hope, charity, contrition and thanksgiving. Whilst washing and dressing, repeat the *De Profundis*, *Miserere*, *Gloria in excelsis*, or any other psalms or prayers I know. After being dressed, let me go up in the study or in as retired a place as I can, and say my prayers: and let them be from the heart. A little before 7.30, let me make a spiritual Communion, and then my meditation. At 8, breakfast, on fast and abstinence days, no butter. Let me be as temperate as I can, and always offer up something to Jesus. After breakfast, meditate again on the same subject, or some devotions. Make an act of contrition and love of God, and say a Hail Mary every time the bell strikes, if I find I can do so without detriment to the duty I am engaged in. At 12, examination of conscience, acts of faith, etc., prayers for the dead, offerings of the Precious Blood, with hymns, etc. When that is finished, spiritual reading or lives of the Saints. From 3.45 to 4.30 meditate for ten minutes on the same subject as the morning, and then spiritual reading or lives of the Saints. [On Tuesdays, Rosary of the Sacred Heart; on Thursdays, devotions to the Blessed Sacrament; on Fridays, the Seven Words on the Cross; on Saturdays, the Seven Dolours of Mary.] 9.30 to 10, Rosary. 10 to 10.30, spiritual reading, night prayers and bed."

No vocation has ever been realized without opposition, nor was that of Augustus to be an exception. His numerous Protestant friends, and above all his uncle, Lord Ellenborough, who had so interested himself in his nephew's naval career, naturally resented his leaving all to be a religious, and wrote strong letters to dissuade him. But he was true to the call of God, though he behaved with the greatest courtesy to all. In Novem-

ber he again made a retreat, this time at Hodder, where the Jesuit noviciate then was. His vocation to the Society of Jesus now became clear to him, and having received his discharge from the navy, he entered its noviciate on January 15th, 1854. We cannot better conclude this first portion of our narrative than with an extract from a meditation written by Augustus while still in the navy:

*On the Certainty of being either Saved or Lost.*

"St. Philip Neri used to say, Heaven is not made for the slothful, and let me take care that I do not come under that head. If I have been slothful and idle, seldom exerting myself to do anything for the glory of God, let me arouse myself. Stir thyself up, O my soul! Lament your defects. Beseech God to pardon them, and endeavour to lead for the future a better life . . . . St. Teresa said to her religious: "One soul, my daughters, one eternity." If one only considered in his heart these words, 'One soul, one eternity,' what volumes they express! Yes, I have only one soul, and if that is lost, all is lost, and for ever, too. How precious, then, ought this soul to be to me. How careful I am of my body that nothing hurts it, that it never wants for anything; but how differently I behave with regard to my soul. I don't mind my poor soul going through all sorts of dangers, and if it wants food (prayer or meditation) it must wait till it is convenient for the body. How long is it to be this way? One soul, one eternity. Think on these words, and you will say it shall be so no longer. O my blessed Saviour, forgive my many treasons and infidelities. Come Thyself and feed my soul spiritually with the Bread of Life. Grant that I may not ever be separated from Thee. Mary, my dear Mother, intercede for me, and obtain final perseverance for me. St. Joseph, St. Aloysius, St. Francis Xavier, SS. Peter and Paul, obtain for me the love of God."

He had not been a month in the Society before he thus writes to his father: "I am very, very happy, and by the assistance of God's grace, I hope to live and die

in the Society of Jesus." His few leisure moments were spent in writing a long letter of advice to one of his brothers, pointing out clearly to him how to live a good life in the navy.

So the days passed evenly by, leaving but little to chronicle. Each day saw Augustus making progress in the spiritual life and in true happiness. Everyone was struck by his beautiful simplicity, though there was nothing tangible to distinguish him from his fellow-novices. After being a year in the Society, he writes: "Thanks be to God, I am still of the same mind, only much more strengthened in it than when I first joined; and I hope by the grace of Jesus Christ, Who mercifully brought me here, to live and die in this same dear Society of His."

In January, 1856, he pronounced his first vows at Beaumont, near Windsor, whither the noviciate had been transferred. And here we may quote these beautiful words of his, written at the close of his noviciate, which pourtray so vividly his simplicity and purity of purpose. "One object, one mark to be looked at and aimed at, one straight path which leads to God's praise and glory to be walked along. And all things around me to be used for that one object, that one mark. Otherwise I have missed my road, I have failed in life, I am ruined. Nothing to be aimed at for its own sake, only God."

His next home was the College of St. Acheul, near Amiens. Only one letter that was written during his stay here has survived, but this breathes the same cheerful spirit as ever. It is addressed to his brother Graves, then preparing for the priesthood. "How much happier we are," he says, "working away for God's glory, than we were while working for our own amusement in the world." But the climate of St. Acheul did not suit his health, and towards the close of 1857, he was pursuing his philosophical studies at Stonyhurst College, where again he was greatly beloved. His faithful observance of the Rule, his unselfishness and constant brightness endeared him to all. Into his work, of whatever kind, he entered heartily, and was distinguished by his zeal for philosophical studies and missionary work.

In his walks he would frequently discuss some knotty point in philosophy, and was ever studying how to present the truths of our Holy Faith in the most clear and striking manner. He also had a great love for the writings of St. John Chrysostom, and was in the habit of devoting a quarter of an hour each day to the study of them.

From Stonyhurst he was sent at the close of 1859 to the College of St. Aloysius in Glasgow, then still in its infancy, and at once became the life of the place. Not only was he a most careful and painstaking teacher, but by his conduct out of school-hours he won the hearts of all the boys. He entered most heartily into their games, started a library, wrote religious plays for them to perform, and entertained them in their walks by many a story of naval life. But after two years spent here, his health, never very strong, gave way, and he returned to England to recruit. In the October of 1862, he was able to proceed to St. Beuno's College, North Wales, for his course of theology, and speaks of his time there as the four happiest years of his life. He was a good student and as usual a great favourite with all. Father Bottalla, his Professor, formed the highest opinion of his abilities, and spoke of him to Fr. Seed, then Provincial, as a likely man one day to fill that onerous post. Many others too regarded him as possessed of all the qualities necessary for a ruler. One Jesuit Father, for example, says of him: "What an excellent Provincial he would have made. He had so thoroughly the spirit of St. Ignatius. What confidence we should have had in him.! *Vere Jesuita es tu* must be the conviction of everyone who has been associated with him in the Colleges or in community life, or who studies the meditations and notes of retreats in which the secrets of his soul are revealed."

His one endeavour now was to prepare himself with all possible diligence for his ordination. His letters, as the time drew near, teem with allusions to the priesthood, and the following notes of a meditation, written at this time, show how high was the standard at which

he aimed: "Of what use is a priest if he does not live for God alone, Whose priest he is? His life is useless, frivolous, if not spent for God. *Ut quid occupat terram?* Think over what is expected of you by the Church, the Society, your flock, even by Protestants. If not for God and the salvation of souls, of what use are you? How strong is the force of example! It is far stronger than words. And what an example is expected from priests who are the *forma gregis*. St. Paul said: 'Be ye imitators of me, as I am of Christ.' A priest ought to be able to say that. Let me delight the Church of God by becoming a holy priest."

Fervent as was his desire to stand at the altar and offer the Adorable Sacrifice, yet was he daily more and more impressed with the sense of his own unworthiness. "What ought a priest and a Jesuit to be," he writes, "in thoughts, words, and actions, and what am I as God sees me? A whited sepulchre, fair without, foul within." On September 24th, 1865, Fr. Law was ordained priest, and on the following morning said his first Mass at St. Asaph. His longing to be sent abroad on the mission was very great, and seemed daily to increase. Indeed, before his ordination he had endeavoured to get his course of theology shortened that he might be free to start for the Indian mission with a Fr. St. Cyr, then in England, collecting funds and subjects for the Madura mission. And now he was on fire to be to the front in carrying the Gospel into distant lands even at the cost of his life. Each morning at his Mass, as he elevated the Chalice, he prayed that martyrdom might some day be his portion. However, he was ordered to the West Indies, in the October of 1866, and Berbice, 70 miles from Demerara, was to be his home for nearly four years. On his arrival, he set to work with characteristic energy, and soon endeared himself to all. On the way out, he had practically mastered Portuguese, and now proceeded to learn Chinese, for the people among whom he was to labour included a great number of the latter race.

Fortunately the climate suited Father Law's health admirably, and he experienced only one slight attack of

fever. Thus he was able to report well of himself and of his work. "There is plenty to do," he writes, "plenty of bad Catholics to bring back, plenty of Protestants to convert, plenty of pagans too, and not an altogether barren soil, I think, for each." But in the midst of so much external work, he was far from forgetting the needs of his own soul, and his letters home (most of which are unfortunately lost) contain repeated requests for prayers. "Pray," he writes to his father, "that I may sanctify my own soul and gain many others. Do not forget that prayers are for missioners and for missions what money and ammunition and the commissariat are for armies. You cannot do without them." And assuredly, these prayers were of great avail, for God most wonderfully prospered his work for souls on this mission. Every spare moment was given to the study of Chinese, in which he became so proficient, that by the end of 1869 he could say: "I hope to be able to preach in it in six or eight months."

This feat he no doubt accomplished, as it was not till October, 1871, that he was recalled to England for his year of tertianship. And if it was with regret that he said farewell to Berbice, what shall be said of the grief of those who were losing one who, for four years, had been all in all to them? An address, in which the Chinese were styled "his special mission," was presented to him, expressing their grief at his departure from them, and their esteem for his work in their midst.

On arrival in England, he visited various houses of the Society, and was for three months recruiting his strength at Blackpool, where he devoted himself to prayer, the study of Holy Scripture, and of Chinese. After the usual retreat, he pronounced his last vows on Aug. 15th, 1872, and was shortly after appointed to the mission of Dalkeith, near Edinburgh. He had much hoped to be sent back to Demerara, but such not being the will of his superiors, he gladly obeyed the call to Scotland.

As at Berbice, so here, Fr. Law at once gave an impetus to the work and became the favourite of all. Protestants could not resist the charm of his manner,

and prejudices were swept away wholesale. He made many converts, and his brisk and homely sermons suited the rugged Scotch taste admirably. At the same time he found leisure to write some articles for the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, and to revise the old translation of the Catechism of the Council of Trent, a book for which he had an especial affection. On being transferred, in 1873, to Galashiels, he effectually combated the drunkenness at that time very rife in the town, and also brought many Protestants into the Church. In no place where he was for so short a time, did he leave a more lasting proof of his labours. His whole soul was in his work. The same was the case at Edinburgh, where he was sent in 1874, and many were the instances in which his zealous efforts for souls were crowned with signal and lasting success. But now a great change was to take place. In the midst of so much successful work, Fr. Law was suddenly ordered to Grahamstown, at the Cape, there to teach philosophy and theology to the more advanced students of St. Aidan's College. The order came early in September, 1875, and on the 21st of the same month, he sailed with Dr. Ricards, Bishop of Grahamstown, for that distant land whence he was never to return.

We have now reached the last, but most important division of our narrative, and may well pause here and briefly note some of Fr. Law's prominent characteristics and virtues. Certain of these, for example, his unvarying cheerfulness and brightness of spirit, have already been noticed, but more call for mention. And first, his great love of the poor. He himself practised holy poverty to the full. His clothes were always of the shabbiest, though in person he was most scrupulously clean and tidy. He was generous even to a fault, and anything of value that might be given him, he at once gave away. This feature we may trace to the influence of his devout mother, who taught him as a child to have a tender regard for the poor, and would show him, in many little ways how to put this regard into practice. His zeal for souls, and his special love for *great* sinners were also remarkable. The number of conversions he

effected is sufficient proof of the former, and as he reflected on the numbers outside the Church, he was often heard to exclaim: "*O si scires donum Dei!*" As to the latter, a person once said to him: "I really think you like great sinners better than good people;" and he promptly replied: "Well, I do, I have found that they are almost always peculiarly nice characters." "When we see," he would say, "how sweetly and kindly God deals with the sinner, it should teach us never to condemn anyone even in our thoughts. We may be condemning others for faults which our Lord has long ago forgiven and forgotten. Even those who have wearied themselves in the way of iniquity, He is ready to forgive at the first acknowledgment of their guilt. No one hated sin like Jesus Christ, and no one dealt more lovingly with the sinner." It was, without doubt, the innocency of his own life that made him feel so keenly for those who had fallen, and this, too, is the key to his great love for children and to the attraction which they ever felt for him.

To Holy Mass he had an unbounded love and veneration, as the account of his last days will show. He was most careful, too, over the recital of the Divine Office. Once, when on the mission that cost him his life, his Breviary was lost, and great was his distress until it was found. There is extant, too, a beautiful letter to his sister, a nun, giving her most helpful instructions for the recital of the Divine Office. "Do not hurry," he says, "you can be doing nothing better for yourself or mankind. Say it as your last Office, as though everything depended upon *this* office. It is our consolation in this place of exile. Make it a real prayer." Most remarkable, too, was his devotion to the Passion, and so great was his power of realization, that he seemed to witness with his own eyes its various scenes. His profound humility shone forth in his daily life, and one who knew him intimately, says: "His humility was, I think, the most prominent trait in his character. He would often say to me, 'My child, do not be satisfied until you *love* to be humbled.'" His whole character is admirably pictured in these words

from the pen of one who knew him well: "His pure and saintly life, his wonderful simplicity and humility, his holy conversation, his great kindness and self-devotion, never stopping at any trouble, if he could help or benefit others; his happy, cheery voice and manner, his warm good heart, his earnest and beautiful sermons, his instructions and guidance in the confessional, all these and a thousand other virtues made him dear to us."

But to resume our narrative. On arriving at Grahamstown, Father Law found there were no scholars at St. Aidan's ripe for either philosophy or theology, and so, while acting as Spiritual Father to the boys, he helped in the ordinary school-work. Under this pressure his health gave way, and he had to confine himself mainly to giving retreats and to catechizing, his spare moments being devoted to the study of the Zulu tongue. As at Glasgow, so here, his influence with the boys was very great, and he was beloved by all, both rich and poor; being, too, on terms of close friendship even with the Protestant clergy of the place.

There is little, however, special to record of this time, and we pass on to the April of 1879, the commencement of the Zambesi Mission, around which centres the chief interest of the subject of this sketch. It will be well briefly to relate the history of the enterprise from its very beginning.

South Central Africa stood in sore need of the tidings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and in the year 1875, Bishop Ricards, who has before been mentioned, had proposed in Rome the founding of the Jesuit College at Grahamstown for the training of priests to spread the Gospel in that vast district, embracing an area of 900,000 English square miles. His proposal was gladly acquiesced in by the General of the Society of Jesus, and in 1876 St. Aidan's College was opened, and preparations for the Mission commenced. It was placed under the control of Father Weld of the English province, who in turn chose Father Depelchin, a Belgian, as the organizer and superior of the expedition. This zealous man, who had passed eighteen years on the Indian Mission, had for two years been busy collecting

for this fresh enterprise in the chief towns of Germany, Holland, and Belgium, and sailed with nine companions from England in January, 1879, reaching Grahamstown in March. The Victoria Falls on the Zambesi River were fixed upon as the head quarters of the Mission, and the *route* chosen was the one through the Transvaal. Certainly it was the longest of the three that were possible, but it lay through British territory, through a healthy country, and was free from the terrible tsetse-fly, so deadly to oxen. To this mission Father Law was now appointed, and on being informed of the fact, was filled with joy and gratitude, and "new life seemed to have been given him." His knowledge of Zulu now proved invaluable. He translated a short catechism into Zulu, compiled a small English-Zulu dictionary, and wrote part of a manual of Christian Doctrine in that strange tongue, in addition to instructing the other Fathers in it. Moreover, he practised diligently the flageolet and concertina, that no means should be untried to attract the natives and bring them to the Faith.

And so, all preparations being completed, on Easter Tuesday, April 16th, 1879, High Mass was celebrated in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Grahamstown, by Father Depelchin, Father Law being Master of Ceremonies. Bishop Ricards preached from the words "Charity endureth all things," (1 Cor. xiii. 7), and at the end of the Mass the *Itinerarium* was recited. The cathedral was filled to overflowing, and all regarded the day as a memorable one. When on the following day the expedition was about to start, the people of the town crowded round to kiss the feet of the missioners, and to receive a last blessing from them. They felt the loss of Father Law most keenly, and many tears were shed as he bade each in turn farewell—for life, as it proved.

The missioners were to travel in four wagons drawn by fifty-eight oxen. Their names were Fathers Depelchin, Terörde, Croonenberghs, Law, and Fuchs, with Brothers Nigg, Hedley, and de Sadeleer, while the wagons were christened respectively *Claver*, *de Britto*, *Xavier*, and *Ignatius*.*

* The wagons were naturally placed under the protection of four great Saints of the Society of Jesus: St. Peter Claver, Apostle of

For the first stage of the journey, Father Depelchin went on ahead of the rest in order to secure an interview with the Governor, Sir Bartle Frere, whose kind offices and recommendations would be of the greatest service to them. Thus, then, was the Zambesi Mission inaugurated. "*In nomine Domini*," writes Father Depelchin triumphantly, "the Zambesi Mission is started. Who is to stop it? In five weeks' time our little band of fearless missionaries is to meet me at Kimberley, to enter together the territory where the great fight is to begin. *Gloria in excelsis Deo!*"

Their route took the travellers across the Great Fish River, and, between Grahamstown and Kimberley, their chief halting places were Cradock and Colesberg, at both of which they visited the Catholics, and enabled them to approach the Sacraments. From Colesberg Father Law wrote to his father: "May 1st, 1879. We have made about fifteen miles a day, which is the general day's march for bullocks on a long journey. All of us are in good health and spirits. Wagon life is a continual picnic; but not only are the meals picnic, but also the washing, and sleeping, and everything else. As for myself, I like it immensely; my appetite is shockingly great, and I am getting stronger every day." And in a letter to Father Weld, he says: "Our order of life is on the whole pretty regular. This is it, more or less: 4 p.m., inspan and go on until about 9 p.m., when we outspan and have supper. Then the Litanies of the Blessed Virgin are sung; examen.; then inspan again about 2 or 3 a.m., and go on until sunrise; outspan, and all say Mass, those of us at least who are able; then breakfast, various occupations, etc., until 1.30, when we say the Litanies of the Saints and the *Itinerarium* all together, and make our examen. Dinner at 2. At 4 p.m., we start again, some of the Fathers walk on ahead of the wagons, and get in about an hour later. Then you might hear in the twilight sounds of music from the wagon of Brother Nigg—his concertina;

the Negroes; Blessed John de Britto, martyred in Japan; St. Francis Xavier, Apostle of India; and St. Ignatius Loyola, Founder of the Society.

and from the back wagon sounds, but alas! only broken sounds, from the flageolet of Father Law. After supper we go to bed. You will be anxious to hear how we get on with our guide. Well, we are delighted with him. He is a perfect gentleman; he points out nice quiet places to say Mass in, all of his own accord."—How bright and courageous all this reads in spite of the hardships that had almost daily to be undergone, such as severe storms, shortness of food, and at times intense cold. The difficulties too experienced in crossing the rivers were very great.

On May 11th, they reached Kimberley, and found Fr. Depelchin awaiting them, armed with passports to Lo Bengula, the chief of the Matabele, and other chiefs, through whose territories they were to pass. It was during this first stage of the journey that Father Law received the sad tidings of the apostasy of one of his brothers. It was a terrible blow, and his subsequent letters are full of allusions to it, and are characterised by a certain tone of sadness. The following words from two of them show us how deeply he felt it, and his love of God and zeal for souls are beautifully and touchingly therein depicted. "Every little suffering I get in our mission," he writes to one at home, "shall be offered up for my dear brother's conversion. O, dear Maude, cannot we force the Sacred Heart to lead him back: let us persevere in prayer and never despair. I think one way is for us all to love God more intensely than ever, and be very generous to Him. And when one is generous to God, is God ever niggardly in return?"

The Fathers were warmly welcomed by the Catholics of Kimberley, who numbered about a thousand, but were unable to make any stay there, and on the 21st of May proceeded on their way to Shoshong. This part of the journey was performed without the services of their guide, who left them at Kimberley, and the difficulties encountered were both many and great. Loss of oxen, the sinking of the wagon wheels into the sand, so as to be firmly embedded, terrible storms of rain, and once a threatening of fire owing to carelessness on

the part of the Kafirs (there being a barrel of gunpowder in one of the vans), these are but specimens of the trials and inconveniences they experienced. Yet, on June 1st, Father Law wrote home from Bloemhof, where a three days' halt was made: "Here I am all safe and sound. I have not enjoyed such health for some years." Some trouble with the drivers here gave rise to an amusing incident. Excited with drink, they one night began to quarrel, and accordingly Brother Nigg was told to devise some means of keeping them in peace in future. The good Brother turned his powers on the concertina to use for this purpose, and the delighted drivers danced away merrily. "And so," said Brother Nigg, "for the first time in my life I played dance music *ad majorem Dei gloriam*."

On resuming their journey, they crossed the Limpopo River, and then for six days journeyed through a dreary waste, suffering much from want of water. "We learnt," writes Father Depelchin, "how important a place a good water supply holds among the necessaries of life. Many a time we suffered much from scarcity, having barely a glass-full for washing purposes. More than once our oxen had to trot on their way for forty-eight hours without a drop to drink. We wondered how the poor animals performed their task so well. How grateful to us was the sight of a stream or a spring where we could, after a long march, quench our thirst and wash our face and hands."

Shoshong, the capital of the Bamanguatos, a miserable town of 10,000 inhabitants, was reached on July 23rd. It was ruled over at this time by Khame, a Christian under the influence of the Wesleyans. Our Missioners had hoped to make it their basis of operations, and had entered the town with hearts buoyed up with hope. But they were doomed to disappointment. The London Missionary Society was first in the field, and Khame declined to allow the Fathers to settle there. He said very logically: "I am surprised that there can be two religions in one. If the Catholic and the Protestant religions are the same, there is no need of having more than one of them: and

if they are different, there will be constant conflict between them, and thus division would be caused among my subjects." Nevertheless he behaved with civility to the Fathers, and granted them an interview. Father Croonenberghs thus describes his court: "In the middle of an enclosure a number of the subjects of the king were ranged in a semi-circle, sitting on their heels. Khame himself sat on the ground in the midst of them, like the least of his subjects. He wore no mark of his royal dignity except an enormous feather fixed on his soft felt hat of English manufacture. His whole dress was like that of some townsman of one of our prominent towns in Belgium; unpolished leather boots, brown trousers, a flannel shirt, and coat of light-coloured English cloth. He is surnamed the 'Gentleman of South Africa,' and appears to be about forty years old; he is tall, his skin is of a dark olive colour, his hair and beard thin. He has an intelligent and kindly expression; he says very little, and all around preserve a respectful silence." On the Fathers coming into Khame's presence, they presented to him their letters of recommendation, and a rifle was offered him as a present. But the chief was cold and abrupt in his replies, and dismissed them with a promise to return the call on the following day. He did so and then made the remarks above quoted. "The Fathers could say nothing more. They felt that the enemy had forestalled them, and could only resign themselves to God's will and trust that this first failure might be followed by better success in another quarter."

Their course now was to push on with all haste to Gubulawayo in the land of the Matabele Zulus, distant from Shoshong some 250 miles in a north-easterly direction.

The Feast of St. Ignatius was spent in the desert, and the Fathers made as good cheer as was possible under the circumstances. "Our festive dinner on the occasion," says Father Depelchin, "consisted of one dish, and not a very toothsome one; a fillet cut from the carcass of a patriarchal goat, with a preparation of Indian corn or millet less resembling bread than a block

of granite in colour and consistency. The toast of the day was drunk in Makalapsi; and if it be asked whence came this choice beverage in the interior of Africa, we answer that there was a river of it flowing at our feet." On August 17th they reached Tati, the frontier town of the Matabele territory, and Father Depelchin considered it advisable, by reason of the near approach of the rainy season, to leave most of the Fathers here, and proceed, with Father Law and Brother de Sadeleer, to inspect the country and introduce themselves and their mission to the notice of the king, Lo Bengula. This accordingly was done, and they reached Gubulawayo early in September. The king received them favourably, but gave them no definite answer. The fact was, to quote Father Law's words, "he was going to be married (he had sixteen wives already) to a daughter of Umzila, the chief of another great Zulu tribe, due east of this about 300 miles," and adds: "We hope to send some missionaries to their country before long. I only wish I could return with the marriage party, for I was charmed with the people." Writing, too, to a friend at Grahamstown at this point of the journey, he pens words that now have a prophetic sound: "There will probably be another great sacrifice for me up here. It may be God's will that I pass the rest of my life here, without any consolation of conversions. I am beginning to learn better that in this world it is to do God's will, not brilliant or great things, that God requires of us. You can fancy how hard it will be for me to labour here without any tangible results. So pray that at least I may at length take my soul seriously in hand."

It was not until the middle of October, and after more than one interview, that the much desired permission to settle in this country was granted by Lo Bengula. The delay was mainly caused by the king's marriage, and eventually the leave was in reality given, because he was informed that the missioners' wagon, which he coveted, should be his on acceding to their demand. Father Depelchin now returned to Tati, leaving Fr. Law to maintain and improve if possible the position already secured with Lo Bengula. He

soon returned, accompanied by Father Croonenberghs and Brothers Nigg and Hedley. The last named, an old ship's carpenter, at once set to work to repair the wagon destined for the king, while Fr. Croonenberghs proceeded to paint it. The result was so successful that Lo Bengula sat in admiration and contemplation of it for hours together. The skill in medicine possessed by the missioners also proved useful on more than one occasion, and this, coupled with their kindness and gentleness, gained for them the esteem of the king in a marked degree. But, strange as it may sound, it was the sewing-machine of Brother Nigg that impressed him the most, and made him exclaim: "What people the English are!" The like of it had never before been seen, and the Brother was ordered to give an exhibition of it, at which the queens and other court dignitaries attended in solemn state. Thus gradually the missioners secured a footing. The premises of a trader, who was leaving the country, were purchased by them, and dedicated to the Sacred Heart; and Fr. Law, writing home in December, says: "We are pretty well settled here now. I beg very much for prayers for this mission. I am afraid it will be hard to make any impression on these people, they are so completely at the mercy of the chief and the witch-doctor. So we must trust only in the grace of God to move their hearts."

Any further progress was rendered impossible by the storms which rage in that country from November till March. Moreover, a halt was desirable in order to make firm their friendship with Lo Bengula, whose authority was great and far-reaching. It was during these months (January—March, 1880) that a complete change of plan was made, which brings our story to a rapid close.

Mention has already been made of Lo Bengula's recent marriage to the daughter of Umzila, chief of the Abagasi. Naturally she had been accompanied to her new home by a considerable number of attendants, and with these Father Law conversed frequently. They spoke kindly to him, and seemed interested in the

object of the mission, and further assured the Fathers they would be warmly welcomed were they to proceed to Umzila's home. This was enough for Father Law. His zeal for souls carried him away, and after full deliberation it was settled that in April or May, Father Depelchin and his companions should push on for the Zambesi, but that Fr. Law should go to Umzila's kraal, distant some 300 miles due east. The reports of the journey to be made were indeed terrifying, and would have banished the idea in the case of most people. Not so with Father Law. Nothing could dissuade him from his purpose. When told that Lo Bengula would never grant permission for him even to start, he smiled and said: "We shall see. I mean to ask him to let me go, and to ask a hundred times over, if need be." This proved unnecessary, for the leave was readily granted, and so struck was the savage monarch with Fr. Law's simple and earnest bearing, that he exclaimed: "This is what I call a true man, for he has but one mouth; his heart speaks the same as his mouth, and his hears is good. Yes, the heart of the *umfundisi* (teacher) it very good."

April at length arrived, and no time was lost in carrying out the plans already resolved upon. Father Law, writing to his father on the 8th, says: "Father Depelchin left yesterday *en route* for Zambesi. It was an affecting parting, for he is old, and going of course to a very dangerous place for health. And then I too start about the 1st of May for Umzila's country, so that it can be that we never see each other again in this life. I take with me most likely Father Blanca and Brothers Hedley and de Sadeleer. The king has promised to send me three or four or five men as guides. And that will be a good thing for this also: it will be a kind of introduction by Lo Bengula to Umzila. The two Zulu chiefs are on good terms too. Our route will be first to Umtigesa, about 222 English miles from here: thence to Umzila's Kraal, 117 miles. I beg very much for prayers, for, as Father Depelchin reminded us yesterday: 'Unless the Lord build the city, in vain do they labour who build it.' You may think of my joy in going on such a mission."

Father Charles Wehl, an Austrian lately arrived from Europe, and not Father Blanca, was to be Father Law's companion, and all started from Gubulawayo on Friday, May 28th, 1880. During the month of June alone, they crossed no less than twenty-two rivers, and many were the mishaps experienced in so doing. Moreover, Father Law had fever for three or four days. Still they plodded cheerfully on, living principally on antelope flesh, with which Brother Sadeleer provided them, he being a good shot. Father Law kept a full and accurate diary of the events of each day, and, though there is naturally a certain sameness in the entries, one cannot but be struck by the cheerful tone which characterizes them throughout, in spite of the ever-increasing difficulties of the way. On July 9th, for example, we read: "Since about June 25th, on an average, we had to cross either a river or a stream or a marsh at least *every mile*." With the people of the various Kraals through which they passed he was favourably impressed, and writes of them: "A nicer, simpler people you could not find. . . . . It is amusing to see how soon they turn anything into an ornament. We opened some sardine boxes, and soon saw two or three with a sardine box tied on the top of their heads."

The Sabi river was the chief one that had to be crossed, and this was accomplished "without a hitch" on July 16th. "We are on the other side of the Sabi," writes Father Law, "and we have just got there on a feast of Mary. May she bless us in the new country into which we have just entered." Blessings both many and great were without doubt showered upon the zealous missioners, but externally at least things now took a disastrous turn. The people with whom they came in contact assumed a hostile and threatening attitude towards them, and the guides proved captious and troublesome, insisting on taking them out of their way to visit some petty chief, whose good will they declared it was necessary to obtain. The delay caused by this visit was no sooner over than another chief demanded their presence. Father Law heard that this latter was "the chief who killed white people," and

determined at once to push on "*in nomine Domini.*" This was August 6th, and on that day an event happened which gives a fresh turn to our story. "Oh! the dreadful thing I have now to tell," writes Father Law. "Father Wehl, just towards the end of the outspan, was missed. I had seen him about an hour and a half before, walking a little farther on, but still in sight of the wagon. He was very fond of solitude, and often laughed at anything like risk at being far from the wagon. We at once fired guns, five discharges, one after the other, which must have told him, good Father, if he were still alive, where the wagon was. Nor for a little did we doubt but that he would soon appear. We sent out all our boys with promise of great rewards if they found him. They returned without having seen him. Brother Sadeleer remarked directly we missed him, 'I don't think he is alive now.' What a night we passed! The loss of good Father Wehl on the top of our other anxieties!" For three days they anxiously made search, but without result,* and as the attitude of the people became more and more hostile, Father Law determined to leave the wagon and walk to Umzila's kraal. "We started," he says, "at 9 p.m., on Monday, August 9th, and walked till 6 a.m.—altogether about 12 miles. We carried the Mass things, my journal, the papers and medicines: we had a few pills, relics and other odds and ends. Our cooking pot was a grease pot, and we carried two pannikins, some bread and a little coffee, and trusted to the guns for the rest."

For some days they were compelled to hide in the jungle by day, and to march only by night. That they were closely watched by the natives is shown by such entries as the following: "August 11th. To-day we *ventured* to light a fire and had coffee." The road was rough and dangerous, and caused them to stumble and fall frequently. "Many a time," Brother de Sade-

* The sound of the guns never reached Father Wehl, being intercepted by some lofty crags, to the other side of which he had inadvertently wandered. After untold hardships, which affected his mind, he eventually fell in with Brother de Sadeleer, but only survived a few months.

leer relates, "we heard the voice of Father Law, who was the weakest of the band, exclaim: 'Thanks be to God, I have only got my feet wet,' or again, 'I have only hurt my arm by that fall.'" A rhinoceros was shot and came in useful for dinner for some days, but on August 14th we read: "This morning we finished the last of the rhinoceros, and there is nothing left but a small piece of the Australian dampers we took with us. So our dinner was small, and our supper still smaller. Thank God, the health of all keeps good." On August 15th, the Feast of the Assumption, Father Law said Mass on a rock in the bed of a river, and that day they were able to buy some meal sufficient for two days, and later in the day they shot two deer. "How grateful we felt, and we thought it was the Blessed Virgin who sent them."

At length, on the 18th, they came upon one of Umzila's kraals. "It was music to our ears," writes Father Law, "to hear the Zulu tongue again. We all felt very grateful to God for leading us into port, so to speak, after such rough weather." They here recounted the treatment they had experienced at the hands of the two chiefs, mention of which has already been made, and were assured that the wagon would be restored and meet punishment inflicted on the offenders. But they were still many miles from Umzila's home. On some days they walked as many as fifteen and a half miles, but on August 20th, we read: "To-day only went about two miles, as I was very tired out, and Brother Hedley anything but fresh." At length on August 31st, they reached Umzila's kraal, having walked one hundred and seventy miles in three weeks, across the desert, beneath the rays of a tropical sun, and without proper nourishment. "We changed," says Fr. Law, "our *Itinerarium* to-day for a *Te Deum*. God has been indeed good to us on the road." We recognise at once, in the tone of all that Father Law writes, the same unvarying tone of cheerfulness to which attention has so often been called. Still sad indeed was his present position. No Portuguese, no English were to be found, no trade was carried on, and the very necessaries of

life could not be purchased except at a considerable distance. All this was in direct contradiction to what they had been told before starting. And though Umzila sent them presents of food, he was long in granting them an interview, without which nothing could be effected. At length on the 5th of September they saw the chief, and it was then settled that Brother de Sadeleer should return to bring up the wagon, while Father Law and Brother Hedley remained where they were. The brave Brother started back that very day, and it was expected that he would return with the wagon in about three weeks' time. He found it intact, nay guarded, for the Mashonas dreaded Umzila's vengeance had they dared to pillage it, and naturally was all for returning at once. Umzila's people, however, insisted on also visiting the second chief that had molested the missioners, and thus caused a fatal delay. The rainy season came on, and though Brother de Sadeleer started, he never again reached Umzila's kraal.

We now return to Father Law and Brother Hedley, and the story shall be ended, as far as possible, in the former's own words. Their little hut, a present from Umzila, measured 13 feet in diameter and 12 in height, its door answering the triple purpose of door, window, and chimney. Moreover they had two Matabele guides to share this oven with them (for such it must be called) and the discomfort thus experienced is easier to imagine than describe. The people were extremely indolent, and paid but little attention to the cultivation of the land. A handful of corn seemed to satisfy all their needs, and they spent much of their day in watching the "white men," an amusement that did not tend to facilitate the entry of any fresh air into the hut. "We felt," writes Father Law, "much as the lions must do at the Zoological Gardens." Their presence at the door of his hut, however, afforded an opportunity of which he gladly availed himself, of initiating them into the mysteries of the Faith, but little indeed could be effected in this way. Already he and his companion were beginning to suffer much from want, and there seemed no prospect of the arrival of the wagon. Though

Umzila had at first sent them food, he afterwards neglected them entirely, owing to his being in a more or less intoxicated condition for weeks together. Some of his subjects however took compassion on them, and gave them a little food. Thus we read in Fr. Law's diary: "September 7th. The wife of a man living in a hut close to us kindly brought us a kind of soup made out of Kafir corn. She took pity, as she said, on the white people so in want. God reward her kindness."*

Day succeeded day, and no wagon appeared, nor had they any means of procuring food. One of the guides fell ill, and for September 24th we read: "Brother Hedley and myself both down with a little fever. I am not astonished at our being sick, for we have now been three weeks on nothing but Kafir corn." Both, however, rallied fairly, and on the 26th, the entry is: "I am a little better. Brother Hedley all right. Happiness of saying Mass. It was a struggle. But what a consolation to get the Blessed Sacrament once more." This passage gives us an insight into the weakness of his state of health. Indeed they were being gradually starved to death.

The pathos of the next few extracts is very great. "September 28th. My fever is gone, but I suffer much from want of food. God's holy will be done." That day Father Law made a great effort to see Umzila, and eventually succeeded in doing so, with the result that a little meat was sent to him. But a second and like request made a day or two after was coldly received, and he only got a few bags of meal from one of Umzila's chief men.

On October 1st, Father Law wrote: "I feel so sad when I look at Brother Hedley. He looks haggard and going down the hill. Dear Lord, look on us;" and on the 2nd, Feast of Guardian Angels: "How I entreat our dear Lord that He would send His Angels to bring on the wagon quick. I am so afraid for Brother

* This good woman seems to have shown similar kindness to Fr. Law on more than one occasion. And her kindness was not forgotten. One of the last sentences Fr. Law wrote before his death is the following: "I give my blanket to the good woman when I die, and Brother Hedley his when he dies. A. Law."

Hedley. If he had any spirits, but he is so down-spirited. And he says he cannot bear *amabele*, and there is nothing else to eat."—The next day was Rosary Sunday, on which Feast Fr. Law had preached his first sermon. He was able to say Mass, and how gladly would the brave missioner have gathered his little remaining strength and preached had any one cared to listen! On Oct. 6th, after a day of fever, he writes: "Better, but both Brother Hedley and myself are getting weaker and weaker, and I am afraid if the wagon does not arrive soon, we shall both die." On Oct. 7th he was again able to say Mass and "received Holy Communion as Viaticum." On the 10th he felt a little stronger, and gives us the reason: "Slept beautifully last night, a thing I have not done for a long time. Brother Hedley keeps well. I managed to say Mass. What a consolation! I begged our Lord, at receiving Holy Communion, that He would absolve me and give me Extreme Unction." On the same day he wrote to Fr. Weld: "Pray for me. So many thanks for all your kindness to me. I can't expect to live unless the wagon arrives very soon. The fever has weakened me so much, and there is only Kafir corn to bring my strength back, not even salt to put with it. But all these troubles help my hope that God would not send them except in His mercy to prepare me for Heaven. When you hear of my death, write a good consoling letter to my father. May my poor brother return to the dear faith. I hope you will receive my journal all right."

It is hard to refrain from tears on reading the next three entries:

"Oct. 11th. Bad all to-day. Delirious in the evening. Brother Hedley so kind. God bless him and take care of him when I die."

"Oct. 12th. Very weak. Jesus, I cannot pray much, but my heart is with Thee, and rests in Thy infinite mercy."

"Oct. 13th. Brother Hedley is keeping fairly well. Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Lord Jesus, receive my soul. Love to all the Fathers and Brothers. The two king's boys leave us, and God is our only protection."

There exist two last letters of Father Law, and one of these shall be given *in extenso*. It is addressed to his father, and bears date October 12th, 1880.

"Dearest Father. I am not far off my end. I trust in the infinite mercy of God. God bless you—you were the means of giving me the Holy Faith. Tell dear, dear Graves, to listen to my last words, and to return to the dear Holy Catholic Faith. Best love to all. I die of fever, but if I could have had proper nourishment, I think I could easily have got right. But God's Will is sweetest. Jesus! Mary!

"Your most affectionate son,
A. H. Law, S.J."

The other letter is addressed to Fr. Wehl* and to Brother de Sadeleer, in which he begins by asking pardon "with all his heart for all the scandal and bad temper," and then gives most full and careful directions and advice as to how they should act with regard to the mission. It is indeed wonderful that he could have penned a letter requiring so much thought, in such a state of weakness. We are reminded of the great Fr. Burke, the Dominican orator, preaching for the starving children of Donegal, though dying and in terrible suffering.

Father Law's martyrdom was prolonged for yet another six weeks. On October the 15th, St. Theresa's day, he offered the Holy Sacrifice for the last time. He was so weak that he could not have stood upright, but for a rope which Brother Hedley had fastened across the hut to support him. For the next five weeks he was often very delirious, but in his lucid intervals would ask his companion to speak to him of the sufferings of our Lord, to help him to be resigned and patient under his trials. The good Brother did all in his power for one he loved and venerated so truly, but he himself was exhausted with fever and starvation, and was, moreover, suffering intensely from a huge abscess on his

* Fr. Law had heard that Fr. Wehl was still alive from Umzila himself.

knee, which soon made him unable to walk or even crawl about the hut. In such a state it was that these holy men were left to the mercies of one of the natives, who more than once left them without food for four-and-twenty hours. Nothing ruffled the beautiful peace and loving resignation of Fr. Law, and he was quite conscious when, on November the 25th, the end at length came. His last words were: "I do not think I could despair, even if I tried." Brother Hedley, seeing the end was at hand, said the prayers for the dying, and the soul of this holy martyr winged its flight into the presence of Him Whom he had loved and served through life, and a knowledge and love of Whom it had ever been his desire to spread.

What remains must be briefly told. At once the rats began to devour the body, thus necessitating immediate burial, and the grave of Father Law is unknown to this day. A tablet has been erected to his memory in the church of St. Mary Magdalen, at Mortlake, and his bright example and holy life shall make his memory live in the hearts of many.

A word must be added as to the fate of Brother Hedley. For three weeks after Fr. Law's death, he lay in the hut at Umzila's, fighting with the rats, which, deprived of the dead, attacked the living, until Umzila gave orders that he should be succoured. He was then carried back, though with scant good-will and great roughness, to the abandoned wagon. His bearers deposited him at Sebenal, a village some 40 miles distant from the wagon, and there Fr. Wehl and Brother de Sadeleer met him on January 11th, 1881. "Never in my whole life," writes the latter, "did I see any sick person in so wretched a state; his entire body was covered with sores and ulcers, and his wounds were filled with vermin. He appeared stupefied by the excess of his sufferings, both physical and mental. It is a wonder that he did not succumb as Father Law did. He must have had an iron constitution. For five months he had not changed his clothes, which were all in shreds and tatters. The moment he reached our wagon, I set about doing all I could to alleviate his

condition. I laid him on our blankets and washed him from head to foot. I dressed his sores with oil and balsam, and put on him clean linen and new clothes. He soon appeared to gain strength, and at the end of a few days, with good care and nourishment, was in a fair way to recovery."

It was not till May, 1881, that the news of Father Law's death reached England, being conveyed to his father in a letter from Father Weld, who, after offering Mr. Law his sincere sympathy, and speaking of the veneration he had ever entertained for his son, writes: "I feel that he has really laid the foundation of a future mission at Umzila's kraal. Remembering what life is, and what it is for, it is impossible not to look on the close of his as a blessed one for himself and a triumph of God's grace; the sorrow we feel will pass, but the consolation will last for ever." Cardinal Newman too wrote to Mr. Law, saying: "For the son, whose death may be called a martyrdom, you cannot grieve long, and he will be nearer to you in heaven than he could ever be on earth."

And now, in conclusion, we would fain give one or more of the beautiful meditations by Father Law which are extant, but our limits prevent our doing so. We cannot, however, better conclude than by his beautiful prayer to Our Blessed Lady, which runs thus:—

"O Immaculate Virgin Mary, my Lady and my dear Mother! I wish to belong entirely to Jesus and to you. For this I give you my eyes, my ears, my tongue, my whole self. Do you take care of me, but above all things, preserve me from every sin, especially sins against purity, which is so dear to you.

"Bless me, O Daughter of the Eternal Father, and do not permit me ever to offend my good God in thought.

"Bless me, O Mother of the Eternal Son, and do not permit me ever to offend my good God in word.

"Bless me, O Spouse of the Holy Spirit, and do not permit me ever to offend my good God in deed or omission. But make me always to love Him with my whole heart, and to cause Him to be loved by others! So be it, O sweet, O pious, O loving Virgin Mary!"

# The Five Dominican Martyrs in China

## (1747-1748)

BEATIFIED MAY 14th, 1893.

### Introduction.

On the 14th of May, 1893, in the Great Hall of the Loggia in the Vatican, our Holy Father Leo XIII. decreed the honours of Beatification to five illustrious Dominican Martyrs, who gave their lives for the Faith in Fo-Kien, in China.

Their names were, Peter Martyr Sanz, Francis Serrano, Joachim Royo, John Alcober, and Francis Diaz, all five from the Province of Spain. The first-named, Peter Martyr Sanz, Bishop of Mauricastro, suffered in 1747, and his four companions in 1748.

After all the technical solemnities of the Beatification were concluded, the Pope came in the afternoon into the Loggia, and kneeling, before the picture which represented the apotheosis of the Martyrs, said the Rosary, the crowd responding to his voice, and pressing round him like children about their father. The simple prayer which had been the daily bread of the captives in their long imprisonment, was chosen by the "Pope of the Rosary" to celebrate their coronation.

The Master General of the Order of St. Dominic then came forward and presented the Pope with a rich reliquary, enclosing the relics of the five Martyrs, which His Holiness received most graciously, and turning to the Fathers of the Province of the Philippines, and that of Spain, he said in a tone of sympathy, "Ah! the Martyrs were Spaniards!"

Then he asked "Where are those who have come from France?" and the French Fathers were presented and all the others from distant provinces. It was a family feast of the children of St. Dominic, in which heaven and earth united, and all the vast crowd rejoiced with them in the glory of the newly crowned.

This little sketch has been written that no English heart may be debarred from sharing in that joy and profiting by the intercession of the Martyrs. The authorities from which it is drawn are 1st, chiefly *Les Martyrs Dominicains de la Chine au xviii siécle*, par R.P. Savignol, O.P. 2 *L'Année Dominicaine*. 3. Lessons appointed for the Office in the Breviary May 27th.

It may be well to remind our readers, that since the year 1587, the Dominican Convent of the Holy Rosary at Manilla (the capital of the largest of the Philippine islands) has been the centre of the zeal and science of the devoted missionaries in China.

The Province of the Holy Rosary officially erected in 1592 became the Province of Martyrs, for the Chinese mission was then placed under the jurisdiction of the Philippine Fathers. To volunteer for the Philippines meant one or more years spent in mastering the difficulties of the Chinese idiom at Manilla: then a mission attended with daily perils and obstacles, with the probable issue of a cruel death.

A very brief sketch of the separate life of each of the five Martyrs is given here, up to the time when, not only in close fraternal charity, but in suffering, captivity, and glory, they were united, never to be separated more.

## Blessed Peter Martyr Sanz,

*born at Tortoso in Catalonia, Sept* 3, 1680.

His education was confided to one of his uncles, a venerable ecclesiastic of the Cathedral of Lerida; and no one was surprised when this young soul, so open to the highest call, so capable of sublime heroism, asked admission into the Dominican Convent of Lerida, and made his profession there at the age of 18. He applied himself with such ardour to his studies that he was considered a master in the sacred science of theology. He was ordained priest in 1704, and the siege of Lerida, which took place two or three years after, gave him ample scope for his apostolic zeal. He constituted himself (with his superior's permission) the chaplain of the wounded, the number of which was very considerable. He went up and down the streets of the city, searching for those who needed his help. He brought them the last sacraments, watched by them and consoled them to the end, and that with such ardour that he quite forgot the precautions necessary to preserve his own health, and would barely grant his body the rest and food which were of absolute necessity.

In this practice of love for souls, his zeal kindled more and more, and he soon felt strong inspirations to consecrate himself to the Chinese mission. After earnest prayer and consultation, he asked and obtained permission to sail for the Philippine Islands. The journey was accomplished under great difficulties. He fell sick on the way to Cadiz, and the doctors dissuaded him from undertaking the sea voyage. But nothing could keep him back. He reached Manilla after thirteen months' painful navigation, during which he had laboured with all his might to instruct the ignorant sailors in Christian doctrine. Kneeling in fervent prayer on his arrival before Our Lady of the Rosary in the convent church, he felt his whole being penetrated with new strength, which enabled him to look forward without fear to all

the sufferings and difficulties which awaited him; and made him ready to give his life unhesitatingly for the defence of the faith and the conversion of the infidel.

The first obstacle the missionary encounters is the extreme difficulty of mastering the Chinese idiom, which all learned men agree is almost insurmountable. Peter Sanz, however, seemed to play with difficulty, and after twenty-two months' study he could speak and understand the language perfectly. He and his companion reached Fo-Kien on the 29th of June, 1715, and he immediately set himself to work with an ardour which never cooled during the thirty-one years of his laborious apostolate. He was during his whole life the perfect model of a religious, and one who wholly spent himself for the salvation of souls. Nothing chilled his joyous and energetic spirit, and because he possessed his soul in patience, he was able to act on all occasions with firmness and prudence. His great powers were recognized both by his Order and the Holy See—he was made first Prefect, then Vicar Apostolic, of the whole Province of Fo-Kien, and finally consecrated Bishop of Mauricastro. He was in exile at Canton, during the furious persecution which broke out in 1729, when the pontifical bulls were delivered to him, and Father Miralta had to use force to induce him to accept an honour, from which his humility shrank. Even after his consecration he wrote: "I think I have committed a great error, and that I ought to have died rather than accept the episcopate." The persecution having somewhat subsided, he returned to his Province of Fo-Kien after six years' exile, and there reaped immense fruit from his labours for souls, till he was arrested by captivity and death.

## Blessed Francis Serrano,

*born at Guenesca*, 1695.

Father Francis Serrano claims the next place amongst the martyrs, on account of his having been raised to the

episcopate: though he was younger in age than some of his brethren, and counted fewer years of apostolic labour than Fr. Joachim Royo.

After a holy youth, he presented himself as a postulant at the Convent of Grenada, and made his profession there at the age of nineteen.

The young religious distinguished himself both by virtue and intellectual superiority. He was very early made lector in arts, and won the admiration of all who had the good fortune to be his disciples. But the zeal of the apostolate consumed him, and with the leave of his superiors he gave up everything and sailed for the Philippines, where he landed in 1727. He pushed on to China that same year, and there passed the last twenty years of his life in a most fruitful apostolate. He was marvellously gifted for his work: the ardour of his zeal made him proof against all fatigue, and he spent his days, and a part of his nights in hearing confessions and instructing in Christian doctrine. He sanctified the places through which he passed by the good odour of his virtue. Christians and Pagans acknowledged him to be a true servant of God. His self-devotion had no limit: when any appeal was made to him for help, he was fertile in expedients for overcoming obstacles. On several occasions he had himself carried in a sack on men's shoulders, who gave out they were taking meat to the butcher. "Father Serrano is nothing but skin and bone," wrote Father Alcober in 1743; "he is all the lighter for scaling walls."

Nothing quenched the joyous energy of his character, the sweet gaiety of his relations with his brethren. Once he had to hide from his persecutors in a cavern in the rock, used as a burial-place; on another occasion in a pit half full of water. Through perpetual danger and bodily suffering he was always alert to seize every opportunity for preaching the faith, and always possessed his soul in perfect patience, and thus daily prepared himself for the fiery trial through which he had to pass to win his glorious crown.

## Blessed John Alcober,

*born at Granada, Dec.* 21, 1694.

He was clothed as a child in the colour of St. Dominic by his pious mother who died when he was only five years old. All his delight was in hearing of holy things and assisting at church services; while he was still a tiny child he would mount on a window seat, or a chair, and repeat to his father the sermons and catechetical instructions he had heard, in a way which foretokened the vehement eloquence which brought so many souls to God in his apostolic career.

His young heart was won to the Dominican Order by the virtues and indefatigable zeal of the Fathers of the Convent of Holy Cross at Granada. He presented himself as a postulant at fourteen years of age, but could not be admitted to the habit till he was fifteen. After a noviciate of joy and peace in obedience he made his profession when he was sixteen. He passed eight years in study, for which he showed great aptitude and formed at that time a holy friendship with Father Serrano, who was to be his future companion in labour, captivity and martyrdom. The Chinese mission seems early to have occupied the mind of the fervent young religious, and a few days after his ordination, with the permission of his superiors, he set out secretly for Cadiz, where some other missionaries of his Order were waiting to sail for Manilla. The commander of the fleet, however, received an order from the King of Spain, forbidding him to take any religious on board, and Father John Alcober had to return to Granada with his hopes disappointed. There all his relations and friends surrounded him, eagerly pleading with him to give up his design. He let them talk and bided his time, perfectly fulfilling meanwhile every duty of a good religious in his convent. The importunity of his relations however became so wearisome, that he begged to be sent away from his native

place, and was accordingly assigned to the Convent at Lorca, where his wonderful eloquence in the pulpit effected a complete change in the moral condition of the city. The excitement of this public and successful ministry seems to have cooled his fervour a little, and he forgot the souls crying out to him from China, in the interests of those around him. One evening in Lent, in the midst of an ardent appeal to the hearts of sinners, he seized the large crucifix, and holding it up to the people, identifying himself with Jesus Christ, he exclaimed: "How long, O sons of men, will you be heavy of heart! How long, ye sinners, will you remain hardened!" All at once his voice died in his throat; he began to weep plentifully, and as though struck by some sudden blow, he came down from the pulpit unable to speak another word. The scene caused a great sensation, and when his brother religious questioned him about it, he owned with great humility that when he was saying 'How long!' to the people, the crucifix had spoken to him in a clear distinct voice the words *And thou, John—how long?*

The missionary could not resist an appeal like this; the finger of God was there. Father Serrano and forty-three Dominican religious sailed from Cadiz and reached Manilla, June 20, 1726. The following November he was sent to China, where persecution was raging, and his martyrdom might be said to date from that moment. He had to use all sorts of stratagems to get access to the Christian flock. Once summoned to a dying man, he had himself placed in a coffin and carried by four men to the place. This contrivance nearly cost him his life, for before he was free, he was almost suffocated. He would get through the guards sometimes in the disguise of a captain, sometimes in the rags of a water-seller. If he found the gates of a city locked, he would climb over them. Once he had to remain hidden forty-nine days in a recess so narrow he could not move at all, and when at last the mandarins and soldiers left the house, he had

to be taken out by the hands of others, and tended through a violent fever. He had hardly recovered from this illness when he was obliged to fly to the mountains of Fo-Kien, hoping in their dreary solitude to be safe from his persecutors. But in his feeble state, with no other food than wild herbs, life seemed impossible, and he asked God to take him. Climbing a tree, to be out of reach of wild beasts, he settled himself among its branches for his last sleep, for he felt in extremity, he thought his hour had come, and wishing to prepare religiously for death, he intoned the *Miserere*. What was his amazement to hear another voice alternating with his own! He listened, and to his unspeakable joy recognized the voice of Father Serrano, of whom he had had no news for a long time. The two religious brothers called to each other in the darkness, but they were obliged to wait till dawn to throw themselves into each other's arms. In gratitude for the signal favour granted them, they spent the rest of the night in singing the mercies of the Lord.

This providential meeting was the balm destined to refresh the spirit of Fr. Alcober, restore his health, and re-invigorate the fervour of his apostolic work. Though the intensity of the persecution prevented him from getting into the chief towns, he succeeded in entering detached houses in the disguise of a water-carrier. He baptized a poor sick woman to whom Our Lady of the Rosary appeared in vision, and who after her death appeared surrounded by such extraordinary splendour that all the neighbours crowded to behold it. "The persecution does not relax," he wrote to his family in 1745. "Two of our companions have already been made prisoners and condemned to exile. It will be our turn soon; but it will be quite another thing for us—when the mandarins get hold of us they will cut off our heads. Meantime the work of the Lord is being accomplished, and this, amidst all our trials, is our great consolation."

## Blessed Joachim Royo,

*born* 1691.

About the time that Father Peter Sanz entered China, another Dominican missionary brought him the help of his zeal to second his apostolate. Fr. Joachim Royo gave himself to God in his earliest youth in the Dominican Convent of Valencia, and shewed throughout his noviciate such generous virtue, that the Father Prior, when admitting him to make his vows, could not resist congratulating the brethren on the precious pearl the Order had acquired. Charity and love of the poor shone brightly among his many virtues. He would collect the remains of the meals in the refectory, take great pains to make them palatable, and then carry them himself to the poor who came to the convent for food.

He volunteered for the Chinese Mission, but his superiors hesitated on account of his extreme youth. He overcame their reluctance by dint of persevering entreaties, and entered China at the age of twenty-three. He was ordained priest on the soil which, after thirty years of fruitful apostolate, he was to water with his blood. He was always the same, joyous and serene, in the midst of trials and privations, unflinching in duty, in the midst of infirmities brought on while hunted like a wild beast; he had to hide in holes and dens almost without air to breathe, or food to eat.

## Blessed Francis Diaz.

*Born* 1713.

There is the same exquisite perfume of youthful innocence and simplicity about the life of the last of the five Martyrs, Fr. Francis Diaz.

He was sent to school at the Dominican Convent of

Ecija, where he seems at first to have been rather idle. He was playing truant one day, when he was met by a Religious of marvellous dignity, who earnestly invited him to follow him. Francis had never seen him among the Fathers of the Community, and with boy-like curiosity set himself to find out who was his mysterious visitor. He never succeeded, but from that moment, a voice sounded in his heart, urging him to give up pleasure and faithfully to accomplish duty. Just as he had made up his mind to devote himself entirely to God, he was carried off by his father from his studies and his beloved Dominicans, to a place where a family benefice had fallen vacant, of which he was intended to take immediate possession. His future was thus honourably provided for, and in spite of the son's refusal, the father insisted on his submission. At last Francis said decidedly: "Urge me no more, my father—the riches and comforts of life are nothing to me. I shall consecrate myself to God in the Order of St. Dominic as soon as I am old enough: I shall associate myself with the fathers who volunteer for the Philippines, and I shall shed my blood for Jesus Christ in China." When the news of his martyrdom was brought to his father, the venerable old man, in the midst of his tears and thanksgivings, related this incident. Point by point, Francis had fulfilled his programme. Had the young ardent spirit the least prevision of all that his sacrifice involved?

He entered China in 1738, and laboured for eight years for the evangelization of the province of Fo-Kien. Like his brethren, he never allowed any obstacle to keep him from the souls who needed him, and many times the protection of God was manifestly displayed. Once when called to a dying man, a rushing torrent impeded his progress. The bystanders assured him he could not cross without great danger. He raised his eyes to Heaven in prayer, seated himself in a little punt, and taking up a plank to serve as an oar, he said to his companion: "My friend, have faith in God: with the help

of the Lord we shall get across." And to the astonishment of all, his words were verified.

He was always serene and joyful in the midst of difficulties which beset him at every moment and infirmities which would have crushed a less heroic spirit. He used to assure his companions that all these sufferings were nothing in comparison with those God had in store for him. And thus he prepared himself for the glory of his triumph.

## Their Persecution and Captivity.

The threads of these five lives, shining with the purest gold from childhood upwards will henceforth be united in that cord of perfect charity, a fraternal support which neither earth nor hell can break. In 1746 a persecution broke out fiercer than any that had gone before. It was instigated by a pagan called Yin-Kun, an evil man whom all abhorred, who brought the vilest slanders and accusations against the Christians to the ears of one of their bitterest enemies, the Viceroy of the province of Fo-Kien. He laid his plans to seize all the missionaries at once, and strike terror into the hearts of the native Christians. Warned in time, the Fathers succeeded in concealing themselves; but the captain of the band, furious at his disappointment, turned upon the Tertiaries and native Christians, in whose houses they had lodged, and tortured them cruelly, in order to get the clue to their hiding-places. In spite of their sufferings, these heroic women, among whom was a young girl of nineteen, all stood firm, exclaiming at each fresh torture: "We fear God; we do not fear torments."

The three Fathers—Serrano, Alcober and Diaz—were soon discovered in their places of concealment, and carried in chains to Fo-Kien. The tears and farewells of their children in the faith were heart-rending as they saw their Fathers carried off, never to return

to them. The barbarous persecutors were enraged at not having got hold of the Bishop, Mgr. Sanz, and Father Royo, and the three Confessors were put to a cruel torture to make them reveal where they were. This consisted of heavy blows given on the cheek by a wooden instrument like the sole of a shoe, which knocked out the teeth and tore the flesh. Father Diaz lost consciousness under it, and for a few moments his brethren thought his soul had already escaped. They were also tortured on the feet, but nothing could extract the slightest indication of the Bishop's whereabouts. It was to put an end to scenes like these, that Mgr. Sanz and Father Royo voluntarily surrendered themselves, hoping thereby to spare their brethren and neophytes further torture. At the first stage of his captivity, Peter Martyr Sanz, a venerable old man, broken by long labours and grievous infirmities, was left sitting alone in the hall of the mandarin's palace, looking out into a court. Raising his eyes to a tree which grew there, he beheld the summit blazing with the most brilliant constellation, while rising above it, were two episcopal crosses clearly defined in stars, and shining with incomparable splendour. In the distance appeared a tomb. Startled at the sight, he rose to approach it, but as he looked again the beautiful vision vanished. When the holy man communicated this favour to his companions, they all rejoiced together, and thanked God for this token of their destiny.

The triumph of the persecutors was great when they had seized all five missionaries, and they were brought in chains a journey of nearly six days to Fou-Cheou, the scene of the final struggle and victory. There they were brought day after day to the tribunal of the viceroy, where they were kept kneeling on the stones for long hours, subjected to interrogations which were outrages to their spotless integrity as religious. Their feet crushed in a press, and their faces struck whenever their judges took offence at anything they said; they were tortured in heart by seeing their faithful neophytes

tormented before their eyes, and worst of all, by seeing some few give way under the pain, and apostatize. These few, only eight in number, were compelled to trample on a crucifix taken from one of the Fathers, but only one really did so, the others strode over it.

These terrible scenes were often prolonged by the most trivial and ridiculous enquiries, and at last Mgr. Sanz felt that a stop must be put to them.

"Do not ask us any more questions," he said in a firm clear voice: "we have always answered according to truth; we have endured without a word the torments you chose to inflict on us. It is enough: we are none of us guilty of the smallest crime." Then prostrating on the ground, he continued: "Order me to be killed at once in this place if you like, but leave off tormenting these poor Christians and true servants of God."

There was dead silence in the court after these brave words: the judges seemed stupified at their audacity, but they had their effect. The prisoners were all sent out, and never again brought before that tribunal. The mandarins concerned seemed to think the case closed in favour of the captives. But the Viceroy was bent on their destruction, and carried it on more privately with a governor as cruel as himself. The venerable Bishop had again for two hours to answer the capricious questions of his persecutors. "I did not come to this Empire by order of the King of Spain or of the Pope," he said, "or with expectation of any remuneration for my labours; charity alone urged me to employ myself in the conversion of unbelievers. I only aspire after eternal happiness; I only long for God." At a word which displeased the Viceroy, a brutal soldier gave him a kick which brought him to the ground: on another occasion he had to receive twenty-five blows on the cheek, given with such cruelty that the features of the face were indistinguishable and he completely lost his hearing. The final sentence was given on the 18th of December. It was death by beheading for the five missionaries—

Father Peter Sanz was to be executed at once: the others later. Ambrose Kou was to be strangled for having acted as his secretary. The other prisoners were condemned to penalties which might be commuted by fines in most instances.

The sentence however required the confirmation of the Emperor before it could be executed. This was not so easily obtained as the Viceroy had flattered himself. When he took the account of the trial to Pekin, the Emperor wished to change it to banishment, saying he saw no ground for capital punishment. This evil counsellor however overbore his judgment, and he at last gave way and empowered the Viceroy Coc, who had succeeded the former one in the Province of Fo-Kien, to act as he thought best; and as he was even more cruel than his predecessor, the doom of the Fathers was absolutely certain.

Meantime the prisoners of hope, during this long period of suspense, kept their souls in perfect peace. Nor were consolations wholly wanting in their dreary prison. Father Thomas Sanchez, Apostolic Missionary, effected his entrance, bringing clothes and money for their more pressing necessities. Obliged himself to return to his mission, he sent a young ardent native Father, Mathias Fu, who was, by his devotion, his skill and prudence, like an angel of God to them. He gave them the consoling news that the natives who had been imprisoned with them had all, by means of large sums of money, been liberated. He brought the tidings of the final confirmation of the sentence to Mgr. Sanz, as soon as it reached Fou-Cheou; and cheerfully risked life and liberty in order to attend him to the last, and recover his relics for his brethren.

When Mgr. Sanz received the information which reached Fou-Cheou on the 24th of May, 1747, he took the letter to Father Serrano, his eyes beaming with joy, saying: "My Father, I shall soon be beheaded." and kneeling down he recited the *Te Deum*. He

then prepared for his general confession, which he made with the most profound humility and abundance of tears. He ardently desired to receive the Holy Communion, but in spite of all his efforts, Father Mathias could not obtain this for him. The holy Bishop did not lose heart, but spent the three days which intervened in communing with God, and imploring Him to prepare him for the full enjoyment of His presence in Heaven. The Chinese have such a horror of being put to death, that they commit suicide when they can in order to avoid it. The guards, suspecting that Mgr. Sanz was aware of his approaching execution, feared he would do the same, and under pretext that the Viceroy was coming to visit the prison, put the prisoner's feet and hands in chains during the interval, and never left the holy Bishop a moment's respite. It was in the midst of these torments that Peter Martyr Sanz made the willing offering of his life to God.

## Martyrdom of B. Peter Martyr Sanz.

On the 25th of May, the Imperial decree commanding Peter Sanz to be beheaded immediately arrived at Fou-Cheou. The prison was invaded by a troop of ruffians shouting, "Where is Pe-te-to?" The holy Bishop, who was sitting saying his rosary, instantly rose saying, "Here I am." They took off his handcuffs, and shaved the back of his head. "What does this mean?" asked the Bishop of Father Serrano. "They are shaving your head that the edge of the sword may meet with no obstacle," he answered. "It is well," replied the Bishop. "I beseech you, give me absolution." He made his confession in few words—and just as he departed, Father Serrano, with full heart, gave him the last sacramental absolution. His weeping companions kissed his hands, and he renewed the promise he had given them of remembering them when he should be with God. He

had been their consolation in their long captivity, and his departure plunged them into the deepest sadness. As he left the prison, the gaoler offered him food and wine that he might keep up his courage. The holy Bishop thanked him graciously for this act of humanity, but he would not touch the food. When he reached the prefect's tribunal, he asked which amongst the soldiers was going to be his executioner, for he had put aside a small sum with which to reward him. But he was only answered by a kick, and the order "Kneel down and be silent."

His hands were bound behind his back, and the cords dragged so violently round his arms and shoulders that the bones cracked as though dislocated. A tablet had been prepared bearing the words, "Pe-te-to has been condemned to death, as a warning and example to all, because by his lies and hypocrisy he has seduced the souls of men." This tablet was fastened between his arms, and rose above his head, so that all men could read it.

They took a gag to close his mouth. "I beseech you leave my mouth free that I may praise and bless God," he meekly said; but the request was refused with a blow. He was then led through the streets to the place of execution. Never had such a concourse of people from all ranks been seen. It was indeed the day of triumph for the holy Martyr, who walked erect and radiant to his death, while his weeping children, who mingled with the crowd, saw his face "as it were the face of an angel." A young man who had been converted by him in prison, showed his affection by keeping close to him to the last. The gag did not hinder him from speaking, and preaching to all who would listen, obedience to the law of God, in order to attain to life eternal. The procession stopped outside the city by a large stone in the middle of the road, and the valiant soldier of Christ knew that his Calvary was reached. "Wait a moment," he said to the executioner, "give me time to recommend

my soul to God." Having finished his prayer he turned to him with a look of unspeakable joy, saying, "My friend! I am going to Heaven!" "Ah, how I wish I were going there with you;" replied the man. "Well," exclaimed the Bishop, fulfilling with his last breath the obligation of his Dominican profession, "if you want to save your soul, you must obey the law of God." Then laying his head upon the stone, he encouraged the executioner by word and look to perform his office with force and courage; and, with a single blow, the soul of the blessed Martyr was set free. He was nearly sixty-seven years old.

At the moment of execution the native priest, Father Matthias, tried to place a cloth on the stone on which the Bishop was kneeling, to receive the Martyr's blood, but he was not allowed to do it. A Chinese pagan, Chin-hu-Yuen, scattered some ashes all about the place, which, when soaked with the blood of the victim, he carefully collected in a bag, and gave the precious relic into the hands of the Father. When he returned to his home, he would not wash off the blood which still adhered to his hands, but laying them on the heads of his children, he said: "Ah! my sons, may the blood of Pe bring you life and salvation." The following night, as though drawn by an irresistible attraction, he went to the spot where the body lay, and collected, with the utmost care, the drops still trickling from the neck and head. As soon as it was light he again returned, took up the stone on which the Bishop had knelt, replaced it by another, and set it in a place of honour in his own house. He engraved on it in Chinese characters: "From this stone the Venerable Master Pe ascended to Heaven." These acts of piety to the Martyr, whose courage he had so admired, did not go unrewarded. The gift of Faith came to him and his whole family, and the blood of the Martyr became literally the seed of the Church.

By dint of rewards and stratagem the Christians got possession of the sacred remains, and buried them in the

midst of their own cemetery. But the Viceroy, hearing of the honours paid to them, ordered that they should be destroyed by fire, and two mandarins were appointed to superintend the operation. When the coffin was opened by their orders, the body was found in perfect preservation though nine months had elapsed since death. The mandarins could not repress their admiration and exclaimed: "Truly this was a just man; nevertheless, we must obey the orders of our chief." The body was laid on a pile, and fire applied for three hours, but some of the bones resisted the flames, and were thrown into a dry cistern close by, whence they were gathered up with pious eagerness by Paul Fu, Apostolic Notary. Thus were saved for Christian veneration some precious relics of the Blessed Peter Martyr Sanz.

## Prolonged Captivity and Death of the other Martyrs.

The tidings of the glorious death of the venerable Bishop raised the faith and courage of his four companions, who had to endure long months of suffering before the crown. which seemed just within their grasp, was won.

A few days after the execution, a solemn tribunal was held, consisting of two Viceroys and other high authorities before which all those condemned to death were summoned to appear. The poor missionaries were brought, wearing the cangue, and having their hands bound, and thrust through holes in a small board. During this tribunal the two Chinese characters, Chan-Fan—signifying *condemned to be beheaded*—were burnt into their cheeks with a red-hot iron. The catechist, Ambrose Kou, was condemned to be strangled. The sentence of condemnation bore: "These criminals are condemned to be beheaded because they have perverted the minds of men by their deceits."

Indescribable was the triumphant joy which filled the

hearts of these apostolic men, when they felt themselves definitively marked as victims to die for the love of Christ. "Never in our lives," writes Father Serrano, "did we pass such a joyful day. At the moment, when with a red-hot brand, they imprinted the sentence of our condemnation on our cheeks, our hearts overflowed with gladness at feeling ourselves marked to be the slaves of Jesus Christ. Now that our Lord has granted us the grace to accept us for Himself, our heads are His, and He can take them when He wills. . . . O may Heaven grant we may have something worth offering to His Divine Majesty! I do not say this out of false humility, but our Lord is so rich and so generous, that whatever His slaves may offer Him, it is always *they* who gain by the gift."

Unmindful of the pain the blood-stained imprints gave them, the four missionaries spent that whole day in praising and thanking God. From that moment, they had only one thought, that of preparing themselves to defend victoriously by their death, the cause of Jesus Christ, which they had so fruitfully pleaded by their lives.

Another precious document from the prison of Fou-Cheou is a letter written by Father Alcober to his brother, a Discalced Carmelite. He begins by begging him to forgive any disedification he had ever given him, and sending the same message to his two sisters. After giving a succinct account of all that had happened, he writes: "Our execution has been put off to our great sorrow, for we had hoped to suffer death in company with our venerable Martyr. But we have reason to think that next month, a few days before Christmas, we shall be fully satisfied, and enabled to keep that feast in glory. Meantime help us to give praise and thanks to God for the special favour and honour He has granted us. May He be praised for His infinite mercy, for He raiseth up the needy from the dust, and lifteth up the poor from the dunghill. . . . So you see the state in which

your brother is at present! What can he add except that the hour is come when he must render an account to God of his whole life. Permit him to entreat your Reverence to love and serve such a Master by faithfully keeping the rules of your order. Thanks to this fidelity you will be able to exclaim: 'To serve God is to reign.' If you do thus, we shall enjoy together that of which it is written, 'Eye hath not seen, or ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for them that love Him.' So may it be with us, brother of my heart."

The familiar words and sayings ring like the sound of a trumpet when uttered by the lips of one who was standing "as it were slain:" and on that height of self-sacrifice, counting himself worth nothing. Truly "Love does great things and counts them small; it labours long, and counts it but a moment, it sorrows only that it cannot love enough." The letter ends with affectionate remembrances to all whom he had known, especially his brethren of the Convent of Holy Cross, not forgetting the last of the lay-brothers. "Adieu! Adieu! May God preserve you long years in His holy love and grace. Yours always, from my heart, and for ever, John de Alcober."

But many months of suffering, physical and moral, were to be endured before the end. The rebellion excited by a detestable sect called the "Fasters of the Devil" was laid to their account, and the accusation of their complicity in the crimes committed fastened to the door of their prison. This calumny gained so much credence amongst the population that Father Serrano was compelled to formulate a solemn protestation that it was absolutely false. Yet in spite of all the efforts of their enemies to tarnish their reputation, their peace remained unshaken, and their countenances were always serene. The Bishop of Pekin said, referring to a letter he had received from Father Serrano, "I was struck with admiration at the perfectly self-possessed and joyous

tone of the illustrious Father, in the midst of his prison, his torments, and all his moral sufferings. These few lines are enough to prove that no human penalty can take away liberty, consolation, and gladness from an apostolic man, truly united to God, as he was."

There were not wanting tokens of Divine watchfulness. The Sovereign Pontiff, Benedict XIV., on hearing of the death of Peter Martyr Sanz, cast his eyes on Francis Serrano as his most worthy successor; and it was in his dark prison, and into his chained hands that the pontifical bulls naming him Bishop of Tipasa and Vicar Apostolic of the province of Fo-Kien were delivered. This testimony from the Head of the Church was a ray of light in the darkness. He was never destined to wear the mitre thus decreed to his merits on earth, for a far more glorious crown eternal in the heavens was on the point of being set upon his head.

The Fathers Diaz and Alcober, shut up in the prison for crime, had also their drops of consolation. They laboured together for the conversion of the mandarin in whose charge the prison was placed. Won by admiration of their patience and constancy, he became their friend, allowed some Christians to come and visit them, and became ardently desirous of being instructed in the faith. He was childless, a thing which amongst the Chinese is reckoned a dishonour, and the missionaries set themselves to pray that he might have a child, in reward for all the kindness he had shewn them. In due time the mandarin's wife became a mother, and he openly declared his belief that the favour was granted to him in answer to the prayers of the captives. He went himself to the prison to tell them the joyful news.

Father Joachim Royo, who was in his prison separated from his companions, was also consoled by some opportunities of exercising his apostolate; especially in the conversion of a pagan condemned to death. His gaoler and his whole family were converted by his zeal.

In the beginning of the year 1748 the cause was again

brought before the Supreme Court of Pekin, and though the condemnation was endorsed, it was decreed by the Emperor's orders that the execution was not to take place till the following year. At these tidings, the Viceroy was furious; he felt his victims escaping from his grasp. He assembled an extraordinary tribunal of mandarins in his own palace, men whom he thought he could win over to be the accomplices of his crime. He informed them of the Emperor's decision, and then went on to say, "What are we to do with these men? Their lives are certainly irreproachable, but even in prison they convert men to their opinions, and their doctrines so seize upon the heart, that their adepts fear neither torments nor captivity. They themselves are joyous in their chains. The gaolers themselves and their families become their disciples, and those condemned to death embrace their religion. To prolong this state is only giving them the opportunity of increasing the number of Christians, who, believe me, will soon get the upper hand and despise us. It would be far better to strangle them in secret, and burn the bodies, telling the Emperor that they died of disease in prison."

Not one of those iniquitous judges dared contradict the proposition of the Viceroy. Secret orders were given that the ministers of justice should all be ready with cords, coffins, and a sufficient quantity of wood, at eight o'clock in the evening, at the governor's prison. Father Serrano was seized first, and dragged out of the prison into a narrow room close by. He knew in a moment his hour was come. Overflowing with joy, he resolved to fulfil his apostolic mission to the very last breath, and exhorted his murderers with the greatest fervour to embrace the law of Jesus Christ. "It is the one only way to get to Heaven" he exclaimed; "if I had a thousand lives I would give them all and suffer all possible torments to maintain this truth." He threatened them with eternal damnation if they refused to obey. While he was still speaking, they

threw him on the ground, and suffocated him. The blessed preacher and apostle held the martyr's palm at last.

About nine o'clock the executioners reached the prison of the Judge of Crime, where Father John Alcober and Father Francis Diaz were confined. "Give us a few moments to thank God," they exclaimed, when they understood that the long desired moment had come, "and then do with us what you will." The few minutes were granted, in which the two religious encouraged each other to give their lives generously for the truths they had preached. Then Father Alcober was thrown on the ground, the cord put round his neck, and two executioners, kneeling on his shoulders, pulled the two ends with such violence that the Martyr instantly gave up his beautiful soul to God. Father Diaz, who witnessed this barbarous cruelty, never ceased exhorting the judges and executioners to abandon their errors, and to embrace the Faith of Christ, till his voice too was silenced by death.

A more horrible death was reserved for Father Royo, who was alone in the prison of Ming-Hien. As soon as he heard he was to be put to death, he began fearlessly to exhort his executioners, as his generous companions had done. "I only came into this empire," he said, "to preach the truth of Christ, and for to enlighten those who are blind, and refuse to see the light, with no other end than to gain souls to God, for whom I give my life most willingly." They took no heed to his words, but flung him on the ground, bound his hands and feet, and stuffed his mouth, nostrils, and ears with thick paper steeped in brandy. Then they drew over his head a bag of lime and left him in that state till he was suffocated. Marvellous to relate, the countenances of the Martyrs after death, instead of shewing the livid swelling produced by strangulation, were radiant and beautiful; so much so, that when the executioners returned at early dawn to carry out the last clause of the sentence by burning the bodies, they covered them up

entirely, lest suspicion should be roused by their wonderful beauty. The Christians of Fou-Cheou fasted and prayed ardently from the 21st of November that they might gain possession of all the precious relics, which the fire had respected, and in spite of all difficulties, by dint of persevering efforts, and bribes to the guardians of the prison, their desires were fully realized.

Thus closed the sixteen consecutive months of sufferings, borne with heroic patience, sweetness and joy. While the world lasts, their names will be held in veneration, and the reward bestowed upon them by the Faithful Judge of all men, is ever increasing in the boundless ocean of Everlasting Life.

Their hands are full of gifts: their hearts fuller of burning love, than when they walked straight into eternity, pleading with those who put them to death, to save their own souls. The gracious smile, which even in death left its impress of heavenly beauty on the tortured body, will greet us as we approach them. Their example will encourage the many workers, who in these days of feeble health and manifold infirmities, hold on in the drudgery of daily duty with a constancy which is heroic, when lit up by supernatural motives. O Blessed Martyrs, ask for us the grace which was so pre-eminently yours, of being cheerful givers: help us too, in our little measure, to love God and souls to the utmost limits of our power, and to the last moment of our lives!

# Alexis Clerc.

(1819-1871.)

By Lady Amabel Kerr.

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In days gone by the birthright of every Frenchman was faith—that faith which had earned for his country the name of the eldest daughter of the Church, and for his king the title of most Christian. But those days are over, and it may be said that now, on the contrary, the birthright of the majority of Frenchmen is infidelity and irreligion.

Scarce thirty years before the birth of Alexis Clerc, in 1819, the French people had turned savagely against all that used to be their pride and glory. Driven beyond endurance by the class tyranny to which they had for years been subjected, and revolted by the luxury of the court and nobility, they, blindly connecting the evil doings of their rulers with the authority which they represented, swept away every law and institution both Divine and human. They slew their king and countless prelates, nobles, and ladies on the scaffold, and then, possessed by their defiance of law and order, they turned against Almighty God with frenzied hatred and, with

rash presumption, thought to dethrone Him as they had dethroned their king. They abolished His worship by law, and set up the goddess of reason to be worshipped in His stead. They discarded the Christian era because it was Christian, and did all that their ingenuity could suggest to express their defiance of their God.

It is true that by degrees and under various forms of government the outward observance of religion resumed more or less its former condition, but irreligion had gained a terrible victory, the effects of which have been deep and lasting; and generations of Frenchmen have since then been born into this world, inheriting, as a birthright, a hatred of God and of His holy Church.

Such was the case with Alexis Clerc, in whom God's grace so wonderfully overcame the tainted legacy bequeathed to him.

His father, who was an infidel and ardent disciple of Voltaire, would have had his children brought up entirely in his own principles, but, happily for them, their mother was a good Catholic woman. She was one of many in France who, in spite of all efforts to uproot religion, have lived splendid Christian lives in the midst of infidelity, doing, generation after generation, the work which the ten just might have done for Sodom. She did what she could for her children. She had them baptized, though she did not succeed in procuring their reception of any other sacraments, they being probably sent from her to godless schools at too early an age. All Alexis's recollections of his mother were connected with religion, and the vellum bound book of lives of the Saints, which she used to read to him, and which filled his little mind with noble aspirations and desires to imitate them. She died when he was thirteen, an inmate of a school where, as he has himself described it, the training was the ideal of education without God; and where, alas, the life and its temptations soon destroyed his early desires for sanctity.

To his Christian mother's example, and still more probably to her prayers, he owed it that in spite of his

anti-Catholic training, received both at school and under his father's roof, and in spite of the life of sin and excesses which, according to his own account, he led as a boy and young man, he never conceived any hatred of religion, such as reigned then and still reigns in France among those who oppose themselves to the Catholic Church. His complete indifference, however, on all subjects connected with faith or morals could not well be surpassed. At the time of his conversion he attributed the grace received to his mother's prayers; and when he heard that his brother Jules had also turned to God, he concluded his congratulations by these words: "We must neither of us forget that holy woman who is stretching out her arms to us from on high, and who, assuredly, has been calling to us with all her might." Many years afterwards, when Jules had married a good Catholic wife, Alexis wrote thus to his sister-in-law: "If your husband and I had not learnt the truths of religion at the knees of a woman as sweet and gentle as she was Christian, it is very likely that after all our years of forgetfulness of Him, God's grace might have knocked in vain at our hearts; and you would not have now at your side him whose just, noble, pure and loyal heart you both love and appreciate."

After passing from one godless school to another, Alexis finished his education at the Polytechnic, from which he passed at the age of twenty-two by an examination the brilliancy of which opened to him the doors of any profession he chose to adopt. To the surprise of everybody he chose the Navy, his choice being dictated less by a strong vocation for a sea life than by his innate antipathy to any sedentary or commercial occupation.

On the 1st of October, 1841, he was appointed to the *Triomphante*, bound for the Pacific. He was entered as an "*aspirant*," a grade which now technically corresponds with our naval cadet, but which was then something totally different, as can be seen by the case of Alexis Clerc himself. He, a young man of twenty-two, and highly educated, entered the Navy with no knowledge whatever of naval matters, having to learn his duties as

best he could, or not to learn them at all, as the case might be, and holding, moreover, no position as an officer. He had passed the most brilliant examinations at his colleges, but he found that nothing of this served him in his new career, and that, in fact, the students of the Polytechnic, instead of standing on a pinnacle as they did on shore, were positively looked down on in the Navy; and that he himself had everything to learn from those whose education could not be compared with his own, and who were by no means his equals either socially or intellectually.

As soon as this truth dawned upon him he set to work energetically to apply the remedy, and gathered all the information he could from his shipmates. He learnt the names and uses of the ropes, and took lessons in knotting, splicing, &c., from a mere lad, one of his mess-mates, who, having entered the Navy from a training ship, was well qualified to teach him. That he succeeded in triumphing over all obstacles and in becoming an efficient officer, can be gathered from the certificate given to him by Captain Péraud at the end of what may almost be called his four years' apprenticeship in the Pacific. "He is an active officer, and his services are valuable," it says. "He has a taste for naval life, and a practical knowledge of his duties rarely found in those who have entered the service from the Polytechnic."

The four years which Alexis passed on the Pacific station were tedious ones to him, filling the anomalous position he did, but they were fruitful years for his soul, without which, perhaps, he might have never turned to God. The *Triomphante* was stationed for some little time at the Gambier Islands, and there Alexis, with the rest of the officers, made acquaintance with the French missionary fathers.

These missionaries had in eight years converted all the natives of these Islands from a state of the lowest and most bestial idolatry into faithful and intelligent Catholics. The men were hard working and honest, the women good wives and good mothers, and all the children were learning rapidly in various schools, the older boys

being already sufficiently advanced to be taught Latin. A church had been erected of hewn stone by the labour and ingenuity of native workmen, and there, at the invitation of the missionaries, the officers and men of the *Triomphante* heard Mass, and were astonished by the devout and intelligent behaviour of the islanders who, during Mass, sang hymns in their native tongue, composed for them by the French Fathers.

Alexis, as has been said, was, though indifferent, neither scoffing nor actively irreligious, and the effect produced on him by what he saw and heard while at the Gambier Islands was indescribable. The transformation effected in such a short time by the teachings of the Catholic Faith appeared to him to be something altogether supernatural, and struck a chord in his insensible heart which, though it produced no practical change in his life as yet, never ceased to vibrate as long as he lived.

Almighty God, Who desired to win this precious soul for Himself, so ordained things that when Alexis returned to France after his four years' service in the Pacific, in order to pass his examination for the rank of "*enseigne*" (or technically, midshipman), he took passage in the frigate *La Charte*. One of her officers, by name Joubert, was a devout Christian. During the passage, Alexis formed a close acquaintance with this young man, and their friendship had much influence on his future search for God.

It was probably at Joubert's suggestion that as soon as he arrived in France, and after he had passed his examination, he devoted himself to a dispassionate study of the Christian religion, which appealed to his logical mind, and ere long he professed himself to be thoroughly convinced intellectually of the truth of the Catholic Faith. Still, the dark misdeeds of his past life hung over him like a cloud, and neither his own sense of what was right, nor the persuasions of his Catholic friends could induce him to make his peace with God, and approach the sacraments. He was ordered at a few days' notice to join the *Caiman*, destined for service on the West Coast of Africa, and he left France for at least two years, still, practically, a wanderer outside the Church.

But the grace of God still pursued him.

He had left France in a far from happy frame of mind. He was absolutely alone, and letter after letter, written even to his unsympathetic, atheistic father, contains the cry for some one to help him. In his mental solitude he wove web within web around him till he almost persuaded himself that if he did obey the promptings of his heart and boldly placed himself on the side of our Lord Jesus Christ, it would be out of mere self-love and gratification to his pride; though in his truer moments he owned that it was nothing but sloth and pusillanimity which kept him back.

God hearkened to his cry for help, and sent him that for which his soul craved.

Two missionaries took passage to Gaboon in the *Caiman*, and daily intercourse with them broke down the barriers which Alexis had been piling up against grace. In their company he boldly maintained the cause of religion, much to the surprise of his fellow officers. He then begged a catechism from one of the missionaries, and set to work to study his religion in a humble and childlike spirit. His resistance to grace grew feebler under this process, and in December, 1846, he made a general confession in St. Mary's Church, Gaboon.

It is interesting to learn that almost simultaneously with the conversion of Alexis, his brother Jules cast off his religious indifference and turned to God. The letters of the two brothers, announcing to each other the glad tidings almost crossed.

After another few months on the West Coast of Africa, that region which had proved so fruitful in blessings to Alexis Clerc, the *Caiman* returned to France in the summer of 1847.

Everything was now changed to Alexis. Christian both by conviction and in practice, his life during the next seven years was but one gradual process of weaning from the things of this earth, and each day that he lived in the world he became less of it. He was scarcely aware of it himself, but as a matter of fact his soul had caught the faint sound of a far away voice which had

said to him, "Friend, go up higher;" and the sound, distant as it was, had drowned all others to him, and rang ever louder and louder in his ears, until at last, as we shall see, he gladly gave his life's blood to obey its call.

What was passing in his mind is more or less revealed in a letter to his friend Joubert, written soon after his return to France. "You," he says, "have preceded me in the narrow way, and you possess the joy of having quite broken with the world. Remember me in your prayers, and pity me. I often feel that I am trying to serve two masters. . . . . I long for what is an impossibility, *i.e.*, to bind my will once and for ever to what is right. Living as I do in the world, temptations assail me under such a manifold aspect that it requires all God's help to keep me from falling: and yet in the turmoil of life which sweeps me along with it, it is difficult to find leisure for either recollection or prayer."

While Joubert, Jules, and his other Christian friends rejoiced at his conversion, the event was far from being popular with the majority of his acquaintances, to whom he had endeared himself by his gaiety and pleasant social qualities, and who now feared that he would be lost to them. Here in England a Christian commands respect even where he may find no sympathy; but in France the hatred borne to Christianity is very logical and very real; so much so, that for a man to declare himself a Christian is to expose himself to unutterable contempt. However, courage, both moral and physical, was a quality in which Alexis Clerc was not wanting, and he made no disguise of his conversion. He did not even wince when called or esteemed a fool, being convinced that the real folly lies in not being on our Lord's side and endeavouring to walk in His footsteps. He soon found means of silencing those who made impertinent remarks.

"What is this that I hear?" was the greeting of one of his former mess-mates. "It never can be true that you have become a Jesuit?" Knowing very well in what sense the term "Jesuit" was used by the irreligious, Clerc promptly replied: "Of course I have; and so would any man of sense or intelligence, provided

he were not totally ignorant!" "His tone, his manner, and the expression in his eyes," says the author of the ill-timed sneer, who has himself handed down the story, "were such that I saw that I had better say no more, and I went away resolved never to return to the subject."

All this time that his thoughts were so full of God, and of his duty towards Him, he was serving in his profession with a keenness which he had not known before. He threw into his work all his great mental powers and his scientific knowledge acquired at the Polytechnic, nor was the Government slow to appreciate the value of his services. During the four years which followed his return from Africa, he was employed at the home ports of Brest and Lorient, and in the dockyard island of Indret, being successively attached to the *Caffarelli*, the *Caravane*, the *Duguesclin*, and the *Pélican*. At that time the French navy, like every other navy in the civilized world, was at the commencement of a transition state caused by the introduction of steam as a mode of locomotion. It was still in its infancy, both machinery and engines being in a very rudimentary state; and it was for the trial of these, and for experiments with new inventions that Clerc, together with other scientific officers was employed.

A letter written to Jules soon after he had made a spiritual retreat at La Trappe de la Meilleraie, gives us the clue to his devotion to his duty, as well as to the secret of his success in his profession.

During this retreat he apparently arrived at the conclusion that, whatever views God might have for him in the future, he was not called on to give up his profession at once to "go up higher." The following words of his apply to his own career as he then viewed it: "The choice of a career is one of the most important that a man is called on to make. It is rarely that he is permitted to give up the one he has already chosen, although he is equally rarely contented with his first choice. . . . . The reason why we choose wrongly is that we choose without God. We ought to have no end in view but the supreme end of eternal life. If, divesting ourselves of all ideas of ambition, gain, or self-

gratification, we look on our career as the road by which we have to travel in order to reach God, and as the means of pleasing Him in this life, and of accomplishing the work He has given us to do, asking Him with faith and submission for light to know His will,—then most certainly He will help us and bless our work."

While Alexis was throwing himself so heartily into his naval duties, he was neglecting neither his duty towards himself, nor his duty towards his neighbour.

The varied nature of his professional employment gave him long periods of complete leisure. These he employed in a severe course of reading. His chief study and delight was the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas, which, though he first mastered its style and contents with the utmost difficulty, was his constant companion to the hour of his death. The solemn nature of his favourite literature drew down on him no small amount of ridicule from the most kindly disposed of his naval friends, which, however, he parried with a constant gaiety and good humour which disarmed all attacks.

The way in which he first made acquaintance with the *Summa* is so characteristic that it must be recorded. When he returned from Africa, he was acutely conscious of his ignorance of the religion he professed. His highly trained scientific mind craved for a greater knowledge of the science of the Christian religion, and how to supply his deficiencies occupied his thoughts a great deal. One day as he was walking in Paris, full, as usual, of this one engrossing problem, he met a priest, who was an utter stranger to him. Yielding to the impulse of the moment, he raised his hat politely and accosted him thus:

"Pardon me, Monsieur l'Abbé, but will you kindly tell me which author has written best on the subject of religion?"

"St. Thomas Aquinas," was the unhesitating reply.

"And in which of his works?"

"In the *Summa Theologica*."

"Thank you a thousand times," replied Alexis; and hurrying off he forthwith procured a copy of the work.

During this period of his life he was full of a really

apostolic zeal for the souls of others. Among the naval officers with whom he was thrown, he found, on closer acquaintance, several who were either secretly Christian, or else disposed to be convinced. To more than one, the words and example of Alexis Clerc served as the turning point in their lives; and it is remarkable what a number of vocations to the priesthood were developed in this particular group of officers.

He was the most active member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, being indeed, in the words of Abbé Guillet, the priest at Indret, worth, in his single person, a whole Conference of the Society. In whatever ship he belonged to, he worked indefatigably for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the men, being nobly supported by his various superior officers, especially by Captain Bourgeois of the *Pélican*, who has left on record an account of the useful work carried on by him. "I have to search very far back in my memory to tell you what you want to know," he writes to Father Daniel, the author of the life of Father Clerc, to which we owe all our acquaintance with him. "I shall, however, never forget the conscientiousness and thoughtfulness shown on every occasion by this young officer. He united the advantages of a solid education to a noble and honourable character, and gave every promise of being a distinguished naval officer. Even in those days he showed the greatest desire to be of use to his fellow creatures. We had started classes for the sailors, which were intended to embrace the whole crew. Every evening, when the duties on board allowed of it, tables were set up on the half deck, and Clerc conducted the classes with admirable patience and intelligence. He gave a course of higher instruction to those among the men who wished either to qualify as masters in the merchant service, or to advance to higher grades in the Navy. Since then I have come across several who were benefited by his instructions, and were able to make a career for themselves. One and all expressed the utmost gratitude for the lessons which had facilitated their efforts."

His brother was always the object of Alexis's most

tender solicitude; and Jules, though the elder of the two, leant for support and advice on his younger brother. Removed both by temperament and position from the turmoil of the political world, Alexis watched every vicissitude in the history of his country with the eye, not of a politician, but of a Catholic. In all the phases of the Revolution of 1848 he studied only how they would affect the cause of the Church and religion, and he foresaw many disastrous consequences which those drawn into the vortex of politics were blind to see. He was, therefore, very anxious about Jules, who, for a time, was quite carried away by political excitement, and saw in the course of events a new birth and new life for the Church where Alexis could perceive only the forerunners of anarchy and irreligion.

"I honour you for your devotion to public affairs," he writes, "but why are you so harassed and anxious? Do be more calm. Do not lose yourself in the whirlpool which is absorbing your life and which cannot produce any good result. Ten minutes of prayer are worth all the politics in the world, and prayer, moreover, is the only good and true policy, for it is Providence which governs our lives.

As affairs precipitated themselves, and blood flowed freely, the Archbishop of Paris, Monsignor Affre, himself falling a victim to popular fury, Alexis saw the hand of God in what was taking place more clearly than ever.

"Though," he writes to Jules, "we have, as far as I know, no personal loss to deplore, we have enough to do in mourning for our country, and in praying for her. May these terrible chastisements expiate our crimes, and may it please God to accept the heroic devotion of a few as the price of such general indifference and egotism. Let us open our eyes and judge of the trees of these new doctrines by their fruits. I have a hope that misfortune may purify and sanctify our nation. O if God will this to be, we shall be saved indeed!"

While Alexis was fulfilling the duties of his state so faithfully, and devoting himself so lovingly to the wel-

fare of his neighbour, he treated himself with such rigour, and practised such severe mortifications, that good Captain Bourgeois felt it to be his duty to interfere paternally. His works of charity were, of course, a great drain on his purse, and he made this the occasion of practising a rigid economy, and of depriving himself of the most harmless pleasures. The habitually empty condition of his cigarette-case was a standing joke among his friends—a joke in which he cheerfully joined. He divided his pay into three equal portions. One third he gave to his father, who was not well off, another part he put aside for the poor, and the third he reserved for himself. On this reserved portion he freely encroached for the benefit of others, it being his standing maxim that all superfluities belong to the poor. Superfluities, however, is an elastic term, and it was the common opinion of his friends that it was rather necessaries of which he deprived himself.

The mention of his father and the assistance which he rendered to him, brings us to the relationship which existed between Monsieur Clerc and his son. They were on the most affectionate terms, and their correspondence shows that the greatest intimacy existed between them. Next to Joubert, his father was the first person to whom he wrote from Africa to announce his conversion. "I am doing all I can, my dear father," he wrote, "to become a good man, by which I mean a religious man, for there is no real goodness except in religion." These sentiments were not likely to be very pleasing to the old disciple of Voltaire; still, Monsieur Clerc does not appear to have objected to the conversion of either of his sons, so long as it did not interfere with their worldly interests. He was proud of Alexis, and had, perhaps, a greater tenderness for this son, who was so seldom at home, than for Jules, who was always with him.

It need scarcely be said that Alexis, who was so solicitous about the spiritual welfare of his brother, and so full of zeal for the souls of others, was most terribly anxious about his sceptical old father; nor was it God's will that his anxiety should ever be set at rest in this

life. Each of his letters grows in urgency. "How can I describe how much I wish that you shared our faith," he writes. . . "My strongest wish in this world is to see you sharing our religious beliefs."

Monsieur Clerc, fencing with the real question, wrote in reply, vaguely assuring his son that he was quite ready to believe if only he were convinced, and that he put no obstacle in the way. He was, however, quite satisfied in his own mind, and being anxious to keep well with his sons, was content that they should be as they were. All the same, he evidently thought that Alexis's religious views were becoming too extreme, and that his apostolic zeal was growing a little dangerous, and sought a remedy by making arrangements for a suitable marriage for him. He proposed to him as his future wife a very good and charming girl who lived near Brest, and with whom Alexis could have every opportunity of making acquaintance. It was a thunderbolt to him when his son wrote back that he had no intention of ever marrying!

Yes, it had come to that. The far-away whisper of which he had caught the faint sound four years before was now ringing more clearly in his ears. He had just been promoted to the rank of lieutenant, and his services on the coast of Brittany had favourably attracted the notice of the authorities; but in spite of his prospects of success and in spite of all arguments used by the best priests and laymen, an irresistible sense of dissatisfaction grew within him. Notwithstanding his honest efforts to throw himself into his naval duties and good works, he yearned to be something different from what he was. "I am not satisfied," he said one day to Abbé Guillet, "and I do not believe that my actual state is that which God wills for me. I am not, I know, worthy to be a priest, but if only at this moment the Pope were to raise a Catholic army, I would go to him at once and offer him my sword. 'Holy Father,' I would say, 'I am your man.'" "My dear friend," protested Monsieur Guillet, "I believe that you are in exactly your right place; for if it is necessary to have good priests and religious, it is equally necessary to have good Christians

in the world, to edify it by their example, and to prove that it is possible to be a true Christian in every state of life."

Alexis tried to be convinced, but it was impossible. The interior voice spoke more distinctly than the voice of any man, however wise or holy, and in the spring of 1850, he felt impelled to make a retreat under Père de Ravignan, and urgently asked to be admitted into the Society of Jesus. But God's time was not yet come, and Père de Ravignan refused to receive him, at any rate for the present. So Alexis returned to his old work at Brest to wait God's time, having the sincere conviction that it was only a case of waiting, and that the time would come at last when he might lawfully obey the voice which had called him. From henceforward he looked on himself as, as it were, a day labourer in his profession, and lived in readiness to give up it and every thing else at a moment's notice.

He wrote to his father and described to him his present position, and his transitory views about his naval life. "I do not wish you to misunderstand me," he wrote, "even though we both quite agree that I must *wait*. I wish I could convey to you an idea of the splendid vistas of hope which the very word conjures up; but I know that instead of filling your heart with joy, I should only cause you pain. . . . . Most likely, I shall just follow the course of events, and leave it to God to place me with, as it were, His own Hand wheresoever He will. . . . . I do not propose to leave my present state by any effort of my own will. . . . . I remain a sailor, quite ready to cease to be one to-morrow, if it please God. I assure you that I should feel it to be no sacrifice. After all that I have said, I am sure that you will agree with me that it is better that I should not think of marriage for the present. I see the prospect before me of another voyage, and before I return to France, a thousand things may have happened. Anyhow, I do not care to look so far ahead. 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'" And with this much or this little, Monsieur Clerc had to be satisfied.

The new voyage to which he alluded was one which

went far towards making his waiting easier to him; and even though it turned out to be practically of a different nature from what he had anticipated, the prospect of it filled him with enthusiasm. It was the purpose of the Government to send a vessel to China, to inquire into and afford protection to the French missions there; the command of the expedition being confided to Captain Robinet de Plas, an avowed Catholic, and a man of singular piety. The selection of his officers was left almost entirely to himself, and his first choice fell on Alexis Clerc, with whom he had formed an intimate friendship at Brest, and whom he eventually followed into the Society of Jesus. Alexis joyfully accepted the post of junior lieutenant, his heart being kindled not only with enthusiasm about the avowed object of the cruise, but with delight and gratitude that the French Government should undertake such an enterprise. In writing to his father, he proudly reminds him of the many occasions, since the days when Clovis overcame the Arians, when France had proved herself to be the shield and sword of the Church. "God," he says, "has made France to be the right arm and the temporal power of His spiritual kingdom. There is not, there cannot be, a higher destiny for any State. Our authority ought to be as universal as that of the Pope; it belongs to us to protect Christians all over the world." If this be, indeed, the mission and birthright of France, well might her children weep tears of blood at her degradation from her high estate!

The *Cassini*, which was the name of the vessel appointed for this special service, left Lorient on the 6th of March, 1851, in a manner befitting her mission. As she left the anchorage, she fired a salute in honour of the Sanctuary of Notre Dame de l'Armor, while the priests who were on board, joined by the crew, chanted the *Ave maris stella*. Two Bishops, two vicars-general, three missionary priests, Abbé Cambier, temporally attached to the *Cassini* as chaplain, and, finally, three nuns of the Order of St. Joseph, were passengers on board. The Abbé Cambier has left on record an account of the officers, in which he dwells with special admiration

on the captain and the two lieutenants, Bernaert and Clerc. Of the latter he says: "If he remains in the navy, his future ought to be a brilliant one. But I should not be the least surprised if he exchanges his uniform for a cassock. A naval uniform is, undoubtedly, an honourable garb, but the habit of a priest is far more so. However, it must be for God to give it with the vocation."

After a few words in praise of the sailors, who, being for the most part Bretons, were not, he says, afraid of the sight of a priest, he goes on to describe the life on board such as it existed under the auspices of Captain de Plas. "Every morning at six, when at sea, and at five in harbour, I recited the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and a prayer which I had written for the sailors; and in the evening, after the hammocks were slung, I said night prayers for the whole crew. On Tuesday, I had a catechism class for the boys. On Sundays, Mass was said at a quarter past ten, with an instruction on the Gospel when we were in harbour. At sea I gave the instruction later. The bell was rung for every service, and anybody came who wished it. We had a real chapel on board, the captain having converted the cabin under the poop into one; and in this chapel we had the inestimable joy of having the Blessed Sacrament reserved. Yes, the *Cassini* bore within her the God of the universe, Him Who walked on the Sea of Galilee, and Who, with a word, calmed the tempest."

During the whole four years' commission of the *Cassini*, Alexis did a truly apostolic work among his fellow officers, several of whom had received an early Catholic education, but who had long ago given up all practice of their religion. Two of these have left interesting accounts of the work which Clerc did for their souls: he seemed to live only for their conversion. Had he been a different man from what he was, such a life would have been impossible. "The tact and boundless charity which Alexis Clerc possessed," wrote Captain de Plas, "added to his constant readiness to oblige his shipmates, made things possible for him to do,

which, had others attempted them, might have given rise to disagreeables and even quarrels. But nothing of the sort ever occurred."

It would not be possible to describe the events which took place during the time that the *Cassini* was stationed in China. Though her duties were by no means as entirely Christian as Clerc had fondly hoped, still, during the numerous riots and rebellions which were constantly taking place, Captain de Plas and his ship's crew were able to be of the greatest service to the Jesuit missionaries there. With these fathers, Alexis formed the closest friendship, being fired with zeal and enthusiasm by the accounts of the sufferings they had undergone for the Faith, and fully profiting by the counsels and assistance of those resident at Shanghai.

There, in that far-off land, he found the peace and certainty which he had vainly sought in his own country. He made a retreat under the direction of Father Languillat, and with his full sanction made the solemn resolution to enter the Society of Jesus as soon as the *Cassini* returned to France. He had not long to wait. The ship was ere long ordered home, and anchored off Lorient in July, 1855.

Alexis wished to carry out his intention without delay; but now a new obstacle met him. During the absence of the *Cassini,* war had been declared with Russia, and this was not the time for a naval officer to retire from the service. He at once volunteered for active employment, but it so happened that all available appointments had been filled up, and his services were declined. He could now retire without dishonour; and there only remained his home difficulties to meet.

His duty towards his father was much simplified by his brother's marriage with a good Christian girl, which enabled Jules to offer a home to the old man. He went, therefore, to St. Acheul, where he was received into the Jesuit noviciate, and from there he wrote most affectionately to announce to his father his determination to embrace the religious life. He reminded him of how constant he had been to his purpose for the last four years, arguing that now that all obstacles on the part

of the Society were removed, he could not do otherwise than carry it out. He moreover proved to him that far from being more separated from him than before, he would for the first time since he had reached manhood, be living within easy reach of him.

But the old man was implacable. He could endure that his son should be a Christian, and patiently suffered him to try to save his soul, provided that he did so in the world ; but to enter a religious order, and especially the hated Society of Jesus, was an unpardonable sin. Very likely the fact that Alexis had been offered his promotion to the rank of commander, and also the decoration of the legion of honour made his retirement from the Navy more bitter to the worldly old Voltairian. "I adjure you, by all the authority which a father can exercise over his son," was his response to Alexis's announcement, "to postpone the step, anyhow until the war is over. If you do not grant this my request, all intercourse between us must cease."

This was indeed a trial to his son's very affectionate heart. Never had man to weigh and measure our Lord's words, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me" more carefully in the balance than Alexis had to do now. It is hardly necessary to say that his love of God won the day, and he wrote to his father to tell him that his decision was final. His father's decision was also final, and though, perhaps, it well-nigh broke his old heart to do so, he steadily refused either to see or receive a letter from his favourite son. Again and again did Alexis write to try to soften his father's unforgiving spirit, but as often were his letters returned unopened. This was the cross which Alexis Clerc found it heaviest to bear in all his life.

When, five years later, he was ordained priest, he wrote, and lovingly urged his father to come and be present at his first Mass. "I implore you to come," he wrote. "Do you not wish to come and behold the high honour to which God has raised me? Having drawn me from the shame and abasement of sin, He has placed me among the princes of His people. . . . .

Come and adore our Lord Jesus Christ, present in my hands. . . . . Come and receive my first blessing, and behold the grandeur and majesty of a religion which, without lowering him, lets a father be blessed by his son. Once more, I implore you, my father, to complete my joy by being with me on this great and solemn occasion." But no! Though perhaps the refusal cost him as much pain as it cost his son, he refused to hear his son's first Mass.

So it went on to the end, and Alexis was never received back into his father's love. On December 30th, 1863, the old man died, without priest or sacraments, and without any apparent renouncement of his sceptical opinions. And yet, when he thought himself alone, he was heard to repeat the Our Father over and over again, dwelling earnestly on each several petition. This was all that Alexis had apparently gained by his prayers, and vigils and fastings.

It is almost impertinent for any biographer to try to peer into the studiously hidden life of Alexis Clerc's novitiate. There he found peace and joy of soul, and he, the man of the world, thirty-six years of age, the distinguished naval officer, and the sought-after friend and companion of all, became once more as a little child. "O happy time!" he exclaims. "I never imagined that I could have once more become so young with the young. How can I ever thank God enough for having given me such a beautiful vocation."

Fragments of the opinion held of him by those in whose company he made his noviciate have come down to us. His biographer says: "There is but one opinion on the subject of his gaiety and good temper, the wonderful charm of his manner, and the kindliness of his character. He was always, even in the world, remarkable for these natural qualities, which were now ennobled, purified, and perfected by grace." "Everybody," writes one who knew him intimately, "who sees him, feels at his ease with him at once, and feels his heart dilated in his company. We could not help loving him because he himself was so full of love."

When his two years of noviciate were ended, he was

sent, first to the College of Vaugirard and then to that of Sainte Geneviève, at which place he first met Father Ducoudray, who remained his companion and superior till the hour of his death. In these two colleges he spent the next eight years of his life in the work of tuition. His influence over the boys under his charge was wonderful and lasting; but in no case were its effects more marked and beneficial than among a class of little lads, pupils at Sainte Geneviève, and destined for the navy. To them Father Clerc devoted himself, being "moved by the recollection of the dangers which he had himself met with in the same career into which they, so young and innocent, and yet so totally devoid of experience, were about to be plunged." The love which these boys bore him was unbounded, and long, intimate letters from them, written either from their homes, or from on board ship, have been found. One of these boys wrote down in after life his recollections of Father Clerc. "As he was the first day I saw him, such was he to me ever after, just, simple and kind. We, 'his children,' as he called us, worshipped him. How well I remember our joy when he came into the playground, and how we clustered round him, all speaking at once, and each wanting an answer. He had to pretend to be quite angry, and threaten to leave the playground, before he could induce us to resume our games. Generally, however, he took the line of feigning immense interest in what we were doing, stirring us to incredible efforts to make the most brilliant of strokes, or perform impossible gymnastic feats. But one memorable time when we returned to school, we found that Father Clerc had left. There was general consternation, and many honest, bitter tears were shed. O Father Clerc, my dear, dear father," the writer continues, as he recalls the manner of his death, "was it thus that you were to crown your life of devotion and self-denial? How often you used to say to me: 'Later on, when I am no longer capable of bringing up boys to be good men and good Frenchmen, the dearest wish of my heart would be to be sent as missionary to China, to die for my God and His holy

Faith.' Who could have foretold that this his desire would be granted!"

Most of these boys, to whose training he devoted himself, and whom he influenced so wisely and lovingly, grew up to be men such as he wished and prayed they should be. Into all parts of the world they carried their faith, and showed by their practice a brilliant example to all around. There is also a list of names of these boys of his, grown up to be valiant men who, either fighting in the Naval Brigade, or as volunteers in the army, laid down their lives for their country in the German war, boldly confessing their God with their last breath.

After fifteen years of active work for souls, Father Clerc, in October, 1869, began his "third year of probation," preparatory to taking his final vows. Once more he was able to retire from the busy world, and lead a life of undisturbed prayer and mortification. One of those with whom he went through this time of probation gives us a glimpse of how he passed it. "It was granted to me to spend with him the year which preceded his glorious death," writes this eye-witness. "Nobody appreciated more than he did this favour which the Society grants to its sons. Many times he was heard to congratulate himself that 'an old fellow like him should be allowed to live such a year.' He was a pattern to all of us. In spite of his fifty years he had all the simplicity—I will even say the grace and charm—of a child. Child-like, he asked most exactly for every little permission prescribed by the rule. But nothing was little in his eyes. Perhaps he foresaw that by this constant mortification in little things he was preparing himself for greater things—even the apostolate and martyrdom."

While he was leading this holy life of retreat, his country was on the very verge of the most terrible experiences, and before his year of probation was over, the France which Father Clerc loved so dearly was plunged into the agony and disgrace of the German war. The enemy laid siege to Paris, and he was torn prematurely from his retreat to take charge of the ambulance

established in the college of Vaugirard, where he remained till the capitulation of the city.

His labours among the wounded and dying during that time form one of the finest episodes of his life. After he had said his Mass at break of day, he devoted himself entirely to his dear wounded, attending to their wants, both spiritual and temporal, and preparing for death those whom he could not cure. He nursed the poor injured men with wonderful tenderness, feeding the helpless with his own hands, and performing the most revolting offices for them. "You do not know how good Father Clerc is," cried one of these poor mutilated men, whom he had tended lovingly and finally persuaded to make his peace with God. "He has done things for me that my own father would have refused to do; O if you only knew how I love him!" He did not wait for the wounded to be brought to him; but went to the scene of battle and rescued the dying under the hottest fire, never dreaming of fear for his own safety. One day he was missed, and found sitting calmly on a stone, saying his office, with the roar of battle going on around him, and bullets flying in every direction. He gave no thought to himself during those severe and cold months of siege, refusing to himself necessary food, or even the warmth of a fire.

His companions knew at the time that his life and charity were heroic, but afterwards, in the light of later events, they reproached themselves for not having more carefully noted his words and deeds. "We had no notion that he was chosen by God to die for Him," writes one, "and we did not pay sufficient attention to his actions, or comprehend how full of self-denial they were. He was so humble that he always found the means of doing the most heroic things unperceived."

The siege was over: peace with Prussia was signed on March 1st, 1871, and Paris was left to recover from her humiliation. During the lull between the horrors of war and the worse horrors which followed, Father Clerc, after an eight days' retreat, took his final vows on March 19th. Even then the terrors of the Commune were beginning, and his friends who assembled to witness his

profession had difficulty in making their way back to their homes through the disorderly streets. Father Clerc, with the prophetic eye with which he was so often gifted, foresaw all the worse evils which followed. He grasped the whole misery of the situation: the lawlessness of the populace, the want of discipline among the soldiers, the weakness of the Government, and the want of purpose among even the best. "There is nothing left but to die," he said sadly; "there is no room here for honest people." And again: "I fear for Paris; she will have to be purified by blood." In a very few days his forebodings were realized: and the Socialist faction, being joined by most of the National Guards, drove the Republican troops out of the city, and planted the red flag on the Hotel de Ville.

It was on April the 4th, and Tuesday in Holy Week, between midnight and one in the morning, that the College of Sainte Geneviève was surrounded by National Guards clamouring for admission. Father Ducoudray, the superior, seeing by the attitude of the invaders that resistance was useless, opened the gates to them. In a moment they were scattered over the house, ransacking everything under pretext of searching for arms. They broke open the safe, but finding nothing whereon to glut their avarice, the plunderers vented their rage and disappointment on the persons of the inmates of the house. FF. Ducoudray, Clerc, de Bengy, and five other priests, besides four brothers and seven servants, were seized as so-called hostages, and marched off in the middle of the night to the Préfecture of Police. When, on their way there, they reached the middle of the Pont Saint Michel, Father Ducoudray turned to his companions with a joyful countenance, saying: "*Ibant gaudentes.* Is it not so with us?" a phrase which considerably puzzled the captors, and in which they studiously sought to discover some hidden hostile meaning.

After an insulting examination at the Préfecture, they were cast into the common prison. Father Ducoudray, with the choice of one companion, was considered dangerous enough to be confined separately. His choice fell

on Father Clerc who, as may be supposed, gladly accepted the post, not knowing, and not caring, that the choice probably marked him out as a special object of hatred to the anarchists. The gaoler, who had been charged to discover anything about the prisoners that might be punishable, could only report that "they want nothing; they are cheerful, and appear to be very happy. They pray together almost continuously."

After two days, three of the Jesuits, FF. Ducoudray, Clerc, and de Bengy, were removed to the prison of Mazas, in company with the Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur Darboy, who had also been seized as a hostage, and President Bonjean. It was strange for the latter, the staunchest of Gallicans and a hater of Jesuits, to be found in such company. A few days later, FF. Olivaint and Caubert, who had been seized at the house in the Rue de Sèvres, were added to the number. The other members of the community, arrested with Father Ducoudray on April 4th, were released after an imprisonment of nine days.

At Mazas, each prisoner was confined in a solitary cell; and for each one there began a veritable and last retreat. When Father Clerc was led into his prison, he kissed its bare and dismal walls, crying out with St Andrew: "O crux, O bona crux!"

In this solitary cell he led, as far as he could without Mass or Sacraments, a truly religous life. At the time that he was arrested he had been occupied in preparing a course of higher mathematics for a class of students, and this work he now tranquilly resumed, devoting himself to his work as faithfully as if he were unconscious of his probable fate, or indifferent to the roar of cannon on every side of him. For the Government at Versailles had collected what scattered remnants of the French army it could, and had placed it under the command of Marshal MacMahon, with the task of subduing the Communists: and now Paris was going through the horrors of a second siege at the hands of her own children.

Father Clerc was able for a time to communicate freely by letter with his brother Jules, and to receive under supervision whatever articles he requested him to send.

By this means he obtained the necessary materials for his mathematical studies, as well as a Bible and a breviary. Last, but not least, he received a copy of his beloved *Summa*—that book from which he first learnt his faith, and which was now to be his constant companion until the day when he sealed that faith with his blood.

"I want for nothing," he writes to Jules from his solitary confinement, "except, of course, Mass. I pray, I study, I read, and I write a little; and I find that time flies even at Mazas. . . . . Do not run any risk by trying to see me. These gates will be opened by other hands than yours. Even if they never open, I am quite ready to resign myself. I am happy and proud to suffer something for the name I bear." He exulted at the prospect of what he considered to be veritable martyrdom; for he was convinced that all that he and his fellow hostages suffered was caused by "hatred of the Faith, and hatred of Jesus Christ," and by nothing else.

But however peaceful, resigned, and even joyful Father Clerc and his fellow prisoners were, there was one want they had which none could satisfy but Him, the loss of Whom caused the want. The want was satisfied, for it was not our Blessed Lord's will that His faithful servants should fight their last fight for Him without that supreme aid which He instituted for His followers. After much correspondence, veiled in the most careful language, in which every most minute direction was given and understood, the Jesuit fathers in Paris undertook to have the Blessed Sacrament conveyed to their imprisoned brethren. It was arranged that the captives were to express a great wish for some cream, and that the gaolers were to be bribed to allow their friends to gratify this apparently harmless wish. Each pot of cream thus successfully conveyed to them had to it a double bottom hermetically sealed in which were laid four consecrated Hosts, wrapped in a corporal, as well as a silk bag to hang round the neck.

From that moment, life was indeed changed within those prison cells.

"O prison, dear prison, whose walls I kissed, saying, 'Bona crux,' how precious you are," writes Father Clerc.

"You are no longer a prison, but a chapel. You are not even a solitude, for I am not alone. My Saviour, my King, my Master, and my God dwells here with me. May my captivity last for ever, which procures for me the joy of carrying my Lord on my heart, no longer in symbol but in reality."

On the 22nd of May, the captives were removed to La Roquette, the prison for condemned felons. In such a hurry were their captors to consign them to this last abode, that nothing had been made ready to receive them, and they were kept for hours in a large waiting-room. A characteristic scene took place during this delay. Abbé Duguerry, the aged Curé of the Madeleine, had been added to the number of the prisoners, and during the hours of waiting, he addressed the Archbishop as "my lord." One of the guards silenced him brutally, saying there were no longer any 'lords.' On hearing his words, Father Clerc promptly rose from the bench on which he was seated, and kneeling on both knees before Monseigneur Darboy, he kissed his hand and asked him for his blessing.

At La Roquette the confinement of the prisoners was no longer solitary. Twice each day they met for exercise in the court, and were able, unobserved and unhindered, to make their confessions to each other. Moreover, the cells were separated by mere lathe and plaster divisions, and each two cells communicated at the window which was common to both, and at which the inmates could not only speak together, but also see each other. Father Clerc's neighbour was President Bonjean, the old Gallican, who, on the brink of the grave, put aside his prejudices and was prepared for death by his Jesuit fellow prisoner. "Well, my lord," he said gaily to the Archbishop, "who would have believed that I, the Gallican, would have let myself be converted by a Jesuit!"

On the 24th of May, the Communists, who knew that they could not long resist the force of the besieging army, which was fast hemming them into an ever-narrowing circle, were driven to a state of frenzy by the sense of despair. Led on by the horrible women of the

populace, who, outdoing the men in the fiendishness of their cruelty and hatred, have ever been to the fore in the bloody horrors which have been enacted during the last hundred years within the walls of Paris, the anarchists poured petroleum over the grandest buildings in the city, and set fire to them. The Tuilleries, the Palais Royal, the Hotel de Ville, and other monuments of history, were in flames. Maddened by the sight, the army under MacMahon redoubled its efforts, and entered the heart of the city in time to save Notre Dame and the Louvre, which had been already kindled. Step by step the army of rescue fought its way till the Communists were driven into the one quarter of Père La Chaise—and those chosen men within the walls of La Roquette knew that their hour was come.

Maddened by panic and fury, the Communists intended to massacre all the hostages, some sixty in number, but the mayor, who still possessed something like a human heart, persuaded them to be content with decimating them. The mob consented on condition that those selected should be priests.

It was eight in the evening when a roar and clamour of unmistakable import were heard outside the prison gates, and then a mob of men, women, and even children burst in. The leader of the band, with some show of authority, demanded that six of the prisoners should be given up; and as the fatal list was called out, the doors of the cells of those condemned were thrown open, and the Archbishop, M. Duguerry, M. Allard, and FF. Ducoudray and Clerc stepped into the passage. President Bonjean was the sixth, his name being for some unknown reason included by those who had declared their intention of slaking their thirst for blood on that of priests alone.

But little more is known. The remaining prisoners, gazing out of their cell windows, strained their eyes in the dusk to see what they could. They described how the Jesuit fathers, one on either side, supported the old Curé of the Madeleine, who, worn out with age and fatigue, could not, unaided, keep pace with his murderers. The very last thing seen, before the doomed band disap-

peared behind the last angle of the wall, was Father Clerc throwing open his cassock, and, as it were, presenting his heart to the bullets of the murderers.

When they could no longer see, those left behind knelt and prayed and listened, till the sound of an irregular discharge of musketry told them that heaven had opened its gates to their friends.

FF. Olivaint, Caubert, and De Bengy were not kept waiting long. On the 26th of May, they, with the remaining hostages, priests and soldiers, were massacred wholesale by the Communists as a sort of dying act of frenzy before MacMahon's troops swept through the city, cutting down the insurgents without mercy, sparing neither man nor woman in their vengeance.

When all was over, and the horrible Commune was quenched in blood, the Jesuit fathers sought and found the bodies of their five martyred brethren among a heap of dead who had been cast into a common grave. They were laid in the chapel of the Japanese Martyrs in the church in the Rue de Sèvres. There they still lie, and an inscription over each tells how and why he died. "He willingly sealed his faith with his blood," is written over the body of Alexis Clerc. It was but fitting that he who so willingly gave up all to follow our Lord in life, should have equally willingly died for Him.

# Auguste Marceau.

(1806–1851.)

By Lady Amabel Kerr.

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Auguste Marceau was born in Paris in 1806, at a time most eventful to every Frenchman. France, having recovered her balance after the shock of the great Revolution, found herself in the position of being regarded as the natural enemy of every reigning dynasty in Europe. Full of enthusiasm and renewed vigour, she faced the situation. Under the strong, despotic rule of Napoleon Buonaparte, who assumed supreme control over her affairs, she achieved an almost unparalleled military renown, and for a time nearly all Europe was cowering at her feet. Every national resource was drained to maintain her victorious position; life and property being freely and unhesitatingly sacrificed for that end.

Auguste, like most French boys of the time, imbibed the prevailing military spirit in his very infancy, and grew up possessed by one idea in life—the desire to be a soldier. His military ardour was, however, doomed to disappointment, and for the strangest of reasons. An uncle of his had, at the end of the eighteenth century, attained to some celebrity as a general under the French Republic, and the family pride of young Marceau's relatives would not permit

him to enter a profession where the superior fame of his uncle and namesake might eclipse his own. "My dear boy," said one who had a right to legislate for Auguste's future, "you must not dream of adopting a career in which a relation of yours, bearing the very same name as yourself, has distinguished himself. You must aim at acquiring a glory quite independent and personal." Auguste, though unwillingly, accepted this argument as conclusive, and reluctantly turned his thoughts to the Navy, which he decided on entering, and in which service he achieved a personal and independent glory very different from that intended by his worldly friends and advisers.

His father had died when Auguste was a child, leaving his widow and little son and daughter almost unprovided for. Family pride was the principal legacy left by him to his children, to which, indeed, was added another, and a terrible one, hereditary infidelity. Auguste, to whom this fatal legacy was bequeathed, had not any even accidentally religious traditions to help him. Born of an unbelieving father, and of a practically unbelieving mother, he was launched into life and plunged into no common temptations without even a spark of religion which could be fanned. So completely devoid was his soul of all idea of God that after he went to sea, even in moments of utmost peril, when death seemed certain, no thought of God, or of a future life, crossed his mind. His mother, who always held the one tender spot in his heart, was his only thought.

At the time when he was a boy, it was not customary to go through any special course of preparation for the Navy. Auguste entered the service as a young man of twenty, his preliminary education being carried on at a school which was not only godless, but such a sink of moral corruption that it was notorious that a boy could not attend its classes, even as a day scholar, without being, humanly speaking, hopelessly contaminated. The principal of a Christian college, whose pupils for some unexplained reason attended the school where Marceau was, has left this painful testimony on record: "Mere contact with the boarders

was like a contagious plague, and after only two months when our boys returned to us, they were unrecognisable, and we could only weep, like Rachel, over our children, because 'they were not.'"

In this school, such as it was, and later at the Polytechnic, Auguste greatly distinguished himself. He was a young man of energy and resolve, and, being provided with very small means, was determined to make his way in the profession he had adopted. During the course of his education in Paris he took up the study of steam and machinery, then—seventy years ago—in their infancy. He spent most of his leisure time in forges and factories, and learnt nearly all there was then to be learnt. He was intelligent enough to foresee what an important part steam was likely to play in the Navy, and what a revolution its introduction would cause in vessels of war; and when he entered the Navy he was better versed in the subject than most officers in the service, many of whom, especially in the higher grades, entirely ignored the very existence of this great power of the future. Nor was young Marceau slow to recognize his own superiority, or unwilling to parade it.

He was, in 1826 appointed to the corvette *Bayonnaise*, in which ship he spent the first four years of his naval life, sailing round the world. After his return to France, and having passed his examination as officer, he, at his own request, served in various small steam vessels employed for mail service, chiefly in the Mediterranean. It was only in such insignificant vessels that he could find scope for his knowledge of steam. In 1836, after Marceau had been ten years in the Navy, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant, and given command of the steam-vessel *Minos*. He held the reputation of being a clever and dashing officer, and while in command of the *Minos* obtained praise and distinction, as well as the thanks of the British Government, for the manner in which he towed the *Pembroke*, an English line-of-battle ship, from among the rocks off Gibraltar, in a most fearful gale which destroyed a great deal of shipping in the Straits. He knew no fear,

and was a veritable fire-eater in his love of fighting. When, however, there was no chance of this he threw all his energies into the management of his ship, which he desired should excel all others, and he spared no pains to himself or those under his command, if only he could attract notice and gain distinction.

In spite, however, of this thirst for approbation his unbounded confidence in his own abilities and his almost audacious contempt for his superiors, which he took no pains to conceal, did not tend to make him a favourite at headquarters, or facilitate his advancement in his profession. If he was unpopular with those above him in the service, he was positively detested by those under his command. His harshness, injustice, and violent temper made his name a very by-word, and any man appointed to his ship was sure to meet with universal condolence. With his equals and fellow-officers also he was unpopular on account of his arrogance, his sneering tone and manner, and offensive airs of superiority. A Catholic officer in the Navy who knew him at this period of his life, and who was very anxious to obtain prayers for his conversion, described him as "Satan on earth;" and indeed it was as if he were possessed by a devil, and—if such a distinction be permissible—a devil of the most unattractive description!

It need scarcely be said that with a man of Marceau's ungovernable nature and fierce hatred of authority and restraint, irreligion took a very active and aggressive form. He both hated and despised the Christian religion, and took every opportunity to be insolent to those who professed it. His blasphemies were so horrible as to shock even those of his friends who were as irreligious as himself. "It seems to me," he wrote at a later period of his life, "that the devil urged me on to commit the most abominable sins, in the hope of making my return to God impossible."

Little as he was aware of the fact, and little as he would have cared had he known it, there were certain good Catholics of his acquaintance who were storming heaven for his conversion. Perhaps it was the very fierceness of his enmity to God which made them so

eager to see him conquered by grace. Their prayers were heard, and faith was awakened in his soul by the most unlooked-for means.

There was a man named Enfantin, a sort of prophet among the atheists of the day, to whom his admirers had blasphemously given the name of the Supreme Father. This man when one day discoursing to his disciples, one of the most trusting and devoted of whom was Marceau, declared in the arrogance of his self-complacency that to be a thorough follower of him, and to arrive at a proper understanding of his tenets, a man ought, as a matter of fact, to have "passed through Catholicism." These words struck Marceau, who had unlimited faith in Enfantin, and impressed him with a sense of his deficiencies. Far from having passed through Catholicism, he was unacquainted with the very simplest of its doctrines; and in obedience to the voice of his prophet he procured some Catholic books from a lady of his acquaintance, and set to work to study the Christian religion. By this means, the devil being compelled to do God's work, grace found an entrance into Auguste Marceau's soul.

He entered far more deeply into the study of Catholic truths than he had intended, and became thoroughly dissatisfied in his mind. Impatient at this result, he flung away his books, saying: "If I go on much longer I shall end by believing all this rubbish;"—but still he took them up again, and in spite of himself, belief in God found its way into his soul. "O," he cried, "how I long to give myself, body and soul, to something, but there is nothing in the wide world worthy of such a gift. God alone could satisfy my soul!" But God was not easily to be found by him who knew not how to seek, and Marceau grew miserable and hopeless. "What is the matter with you?" asked one of his friends in a ball-room at Toulon, where he was found standing apart, gloomy and sad. "I am searching for God," was his grave reply, which was met by shrieks of laughter from his gay and giddy friends.

During this time, while he himself was in search of faith, and very far from the haven, he tried, and tried

successfully, to bring his mother back to the Christian religion. As a young child she had been carefully taught by Catholic parents, but she was left an orphan at a very early age, and her girlhood and married life had been passed among unbelievers; and for years she had given up all idea of practising her religion. Faith, however, had not entirely died out of her soul, and she responded readily to her son's exhortations to turn to God alone for consolation under a great family trial which had overtaken her. He even urged and persuaded her to go to confession, though the thought of doing so himself was very far from his mind. All through his life Marceau had great influence, for good or for evil, over those with whom he was thrown, and in no case was this more powerful and remarkable than with his own mother. From the day of his conversion, and even, as has been seen, before it was completed, it may be said that Madame Marceau, on her journey heavenward, knew no law but his, so entirely did she read God's will through the medium of her son's counsels. There was no devotion he recommended, no sacrifice he suggested, that she did not promptly adopt, as if an angel from heaven had spoken to her. "O," she said in a broken-hearted letter written after his death, "he was so indispensable to my life. His example and his advice were so necessary to me. To his holy and precious letters I owe all the little good that there is in me."

But to return to Marceau himself. With his habitual self-dependence and presumption, he, having become so intellectually convinced of the main truths of Christianity as to seek to impress them on his mother and sister, considered and called himself a Christian, though, as a matter of fact, he did not fulfil any one of the most elementary duties of a Christian. A friend of his—the same good Catholic naval officer who had described him as Satan on earth—seeing certain symptoms of change in him, ventured to express the hope that he might return to God. "But I have done so!" replied Marceau proudly, being somewhat nettled by his friend's suggestion, "I am converted. I have read, I have

thought, and now I believe." "But believing is not enough," said his simple-minded friend: "you must make the sign of the cross repeatedly, as a proof of your faith." Marceau, after a little demur, accepted this test of his faith, and the officer went on: "And then you must pray." "But I cannot," returned Auguste quickly: "I know no prayers." "Anyhow," persisted his friend, "promise me that you will say the Our Father and Hail Mary." Again Marceau consented, though it was easier to make the promise than to keep it, for he did not know a word of either prayer, and it was some time before he saw fit to procure a prayer-book, in which to find them. However, he kept his word, and, once he had broken the ice, he never gave up prayer. It is interesting to know that as he knelt and prayed for the first time, there rushed across his mind the memory of a certain day, many years before, when he lay dangerously ill at Senegal. A good Catholic lady, who devoted herself to nursing him, had given him and asked him to wear a miraculous medal. He consented, but with returning health he had contemptuously thrown it aside among a heap of rubbish at the bottom of his chest. The thought of this discarded medal now haunted him, and he knew no peace till he found it and fixed it on his watch chain. It may be said that from that moment till the end of his life, he was, as will be seen, filled with the most tender devotion to Our Lady. Even then, at the beginning of his conversion, he could write thus, out of the fulness of his heart, to his mother: "Without a doubt, you—I—all of us, have been protected in a very special manner by the Blessed Virgin. To her I owe the change which has been worked in me." And yet he who wrote these words was still an outcast from God's Church. No efforts his friend could use had power to persuade him to approach the Sacraments. He desired to be a Christian, but he wished to be one after his own fashion.

A patent change had come over his life, and in the eyes of the world, and in his own estimation, he was a completely reformed man, for he had abandoned all his old evil habits, and was leading an apparently

estimable life. However, a sudden and unexpected relapse into sins which he thought he had quite overcome startled him, and convinced him of the necessity of the Sacraments in a way that no arguments could have done. But, in spite of this, he still resisted grace with all his might, until it was God's will to find the means of overcoming him.

He was staying for a night at a friend's house near Toulon, when a terrific thunderstorm burst over the place, a bolt falling only a few yards away. Marceau, as he had proved on innumerable occasions, was a man who did not know what fear meant; and storms, whether he were afloat or on shore, always had an exhilarating and exciting effect on him. But this night he was simply overcome by abject, mortal terror, seeing death as he had never seen it before. In this crushing state of fear he promised Almighty God that, if his life were spared, he would resist grace no longer; and, in fact, the very next day he sought for a priest and made his confession. Even while the storm was lasting, he proved the reality of his conversion by destroying a pamphlet on steam which he had written for publication, and in which he had scathingly, brilliantly, and mercilessly exposed the ignorance of naval authorities. The moment of peril revealed him to himself as he was, with his ruling passions of pride and arrogance. It was a lesson which he never forgot.

It was scarcely possible for a man with Auguste Marceau's antecedents to take Christianity cheerfully and joyously. He regarded himself in the light of a wild beast which had to be tamed with difficulty and by force of mere coercion; and his conflict with his passions was stern and unrelenting. None of the essentially Christian virtues came easily to him, and the great enemies of his soul, his pride and violence, met him at every turn. But he spared himself in nothing, however minute, and even had recourse to blacking his own boots as a means of mortifying his self-love. On one occasion he was so resolved to beat down his pride, which revolted against all his efforts to subdue it, that he made a pilgrimage, bare-foot, to a sanctuary six miles from Brest,

where his ship was at the time stationed, and returned through the streets of the great seaport town with his feet naked and bleeding.

With this desire for self-abasement there grew in his heart a strong love for the poor and humble, for whom he felt a deep veneration, for being, as he styled them, "the favourites of God." "I often go to Our Lady's little chapel at Recouvrance," he wrote about this time, "where I find myself in the very best society. There I meet people full of recollection, though usually covered with rags; and by this I presume that they are great friends of God. I beg His pardon for presenting myself before Him in their midst, and pray that for their sake He will listen to me."

As might have been expected, he refused to listen in anything, to the dictates of human respect and human prudence. At Lorient, when he was in command of the *Vautour*, he walked in full uniform in a procession of the Blessed Sacrament, a proceeding unheard of at that time, and which scandalized the pious world even more than the impious. Before his conversion it was the custom among even the best Catholic officers in the Navy, to go to Communion in plain clothes or, in other words, disguised; for it must be remembered that a French officer lives in his uniform, and only puts it off for purposes of concealment. Marceau alone refused to conform to this custom, and by degrees others followed his example. Nor was he more compromising in other matters. Against the advice of his Catholic friends, he insisted on making the sign of the cross when he said his grace at table. "Others," he said, with something of his old arrogance, "may eat like animals if they please. I prefer to eat like a Christian." He never consented to permit any circumstances to interfere with his observance of the Church's command as to abstinence. Whether he were dining in his own cabin, or at a state banquet, it was all the same: he ate the food prescribed unflinchingly, and, apparently, unabashed. He was heard to say that having offended God and been His enemy in so open a manner, it behoved him to act as openly as His servant. In fact,

he dreaded his old, untamed nature, and every action of his life was performed with the studied purpose of subduing it.

Marceau has left behind him pages of painful self-examination, written down day by day at this period of his life, and showing how alert he was against the former enemies of his soul. He saw them or their shadow everywhere, and was resolved that even in matters seemingly harmless, they should have no dominion over him. He never could forget the past. When trying, as he always did, to convert sinners, it was to his own example that he pointed with abhorrence. "Never," said he, when addressing a society of workmen, "do I pass through the streets, and mix with men who cannot open their lips except to blaspheme, without saying to myself, 'You were like them; you too were a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an enemy of your Lord!' But He of His mercy has had pity on me, in order by my example to encourage others never to despair."

And yet God spoke some of His sweetest secrets to this anxious and gloomy soul. God and God alone was the object of his life, and the subject of his thoughts. His love of God was so absorbing, that whenever he began to talk about Him, time flew by unperceived. There is a story told of a casual meeting at a restaurant between him and Monsieur Dupont, the holy man of Tours, the apostle of the "Holy Face." They fell to talking about God, and the hours passed by till day was succeeded by night, and finally, at midnight, the proprietor of the establishment had to rouse them, in order to shut up his house.

It was not possible that the great change in Marceau's soul should not leaven his whole life and affect his relationship with all his fellow creatures. A former messmate of his has recorded in writing the transformation wrought in him by his conversion. "His whole manner changed in a day," he says, "and from the very beginning of his conversion his humility was admirable. The signs of his interior conflict were evident, but the victory was unmistakable." It is necessary to recur to the former evil repute in which his

name was held in the service, and to remember how a sailor considered it a real calamity to be appointed to his ship, in order to understand the full significance of the fact that at a time when there was a great deal of bad feeling and mutinous spirit among the men in the French Navy, Marceau's ship, the *Pluton*, was the only one in which this spirit did not prevail. "How do you manage?" he was asked by a friend, also in command of a ship. "The men in all the other ships are ready to mutiny at the slightest provocation, but your men are always cheerful and contented." "I will give you my recipe," replied Marceau. "If I see any particle of discontent brewing among the men, I go and spend an hour or two before the Blessed Sacrament, praying for them; and, somehow, everything works right." The souls of the men under his command were the objects of his greatest solicitude. He never preached, but there was something very contagious and inspiring in his example, for by degrees oaths and bad language ceased on board, and men who, perhaps, had never mentioned the name of God except in blasphemy, took to saying their prayers.

Towards his superiors he was, of course, entirely changed, for his soul had rapidly risen to the very highest and supernatural view of authority. But whether it was that he was now reaping what he had sown before his conversion, or whether his ostentatious practice of his religion was displeasing to the authorities, certain it is that list after list of promotions was issued, and Marceau's name was passed over, men inferior to him in seniority and ability being preferred before him. Formerly his proud ambitious spirit would have rebelled against this injustice, but now he was as greedy for contempt as he had been for honours, and unaffectedly rejoiced at the slight shown to him.

One chance of distinction and promotion was offered to him, and this he forfeited by his conscientiousness. There was a certain yacht which had been built on purpose for the use of the King, Louis Philippe, who himself offered the command of her to Marceau, the offer being, of course, gladly accepted by him, as it was

a certain road to promotion. As soon, however, as he saw the little vessel, his experienced eye told him that she was built in such a manner as to be absolutely unsafe. He went to the authorities, and with his customary straightforwardness pointed out the fatal defects in the construction of the yacht, and added that his conscience would not permit him to take command of a vessel which must endanger the lives of the king and royal family. The affair became public, and competent judges were appointed to examine into the matter, with the result that the little vessel was condemned for the very reasons pointed out by Marceau. But neither those who planned the yacht, nor those who approved of the plans, were likely to forgive the man who knew more than they did, and his professional prospects were hopelessly ruined. At thirty-seven he was still a lieutenant, and so he was likely to remain.

During Marceau's service in the Mediterranean he made acquaintance at Toulon with Monseigneur Douarre, of the Order of Marists, the Vicar Apostolic of New Caledonia, who had come to France to seek assistance for the missions in Central Oceania. Zeal for souls formed a link between him and Marceau, who entered deeply into his views and expressed a strong wish to help him in any way that was in his power. It was the Bishop's design to fit out a vessel for the service of the missions. His vast diocese was composed of almost countless islands, in various stages of conversion, and in varying need of assistance; and to his mind an effective and armed ship would be the best means of keeping up communication with, and assisting the scattered missionaries. He had to leave France before he could mature this plan, but a young merchant of Havre took up his idea, and devoted his fortune to carrying it out. As a means to an end, he formed a company, which took the name of the French Oceanic Company, and which, as a beginning of the work in view, purchased and fitted out a suitable ship. The next thing to do was to find a suitable man to command her, and undertake the complicated service for which she was destined. The thoughts of all concerned

centred on Auguste Marceau, to whom the offer of the command of the expedition was accordingly made. He was at the time at Brest, fitting out a ship for foreign service, and though he keenly desired to labour for the salvation of souls, he could not at once make up his mind to accept the offer. Not only did he believe himself to be unfitted for the work proposed, but he depended on his profession for his very subsistence, and should the Oceanic Company fail, he would, in his own words, be reduced to begging for bread on the steps of the church. However, his desire to serve God won the day, and, having with difficulty obtained leave from the Government, he put himself at the disposal of the Company.

His professional friends were indignant with him for taking this step, for there reigned in the navy an unreasonable and unbounded contempt for anything connected with the merchant service. "Are you quite mad?" was said to him by a friend. "Yes," replied Marceau, "humanly speaking, I am; but I hope that my folly may prove to be true wisdom, for it is for faith and by faith that I am acting." His mother alone stood by him. She appreciated her son's sacrifice, and no word of blame or regret could her friends extract from her. "I had rather see my dear son's name the last on the list of martyrs than the first on the list of admirals," was her reply.

Marceau discovered soon enough that his new employers were somewhat exacting task-masters, and for a whole year after his resignation he was employed in a painful and humiliating process of begging. The national and somewhat mercantile spirit which pervaded the Oceanic Company displeased him, and he vainly tried to give to the work a more religious character. At last, however, in August 1845, he took command of the missionary ship, which had been solemnly blessed by the Bishop of Nantes, and re-christened the *Ark of the Covenant*. She carried a figure-head of Our Lady of Compassion, and at her mast head floated a flag with a cross on it. With twenty missionaries on board she finally sailed for the Pacific on November 15, 1845,

arriving at the first island in Monseigneur Douarre's vast vicariate ten months afterwards.

To the Congregation of Picpus, and to the Order of Marist fathers is due the glory of first Christianizing the beautiful islands of the Pacific, and of watering with their blood the fruitful seed they sowed. Marceau's life and work during the next four years are so mixed up with the history of the Marist missions, to aid and protect which the *Ark of the Covenant* was chartered, that it is necessary before proceeding further to glance briefly at the work accomplished by them.

Scarcely ten years before the *Ark of the Covenant* arrived in Oceania, six Marist fathers, under the direction of Monseigneur Pompallier, Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania, arrived from France among the islands. After a vain attempt to land in Tahiti, whence they were driven by the English Protestant missionaries, they separated, and spread the faith in different islands.

It is hard to imagine, and harder to describe, the hideous forms which heathenism took in these parts. The inhabitants of a large number of the islands were cannibals of the most horrible description, for they did not confine themselves to devouring prisoners of war, as a token of victory, nor, as a rule, was cannibalism part of their religious worship, but it was practised out of sheer hideous greed. "O, if you only knew how good human flesh is to eat!" was the only, and, as he considered it, the sufficient excuse pleaded by a young chief of Halgan, in reply to Marceau's reproaches for having treacherously planned an ambuscade, meant to entrap the whole ship's company of the *Ark of the Covenant*. Friend turned on friend, and brother on brother, to slay and eat him. Children were plucked from their mothers' arms and devoured before their eyes; and a chief is mentioned in the annals of the mission of Futuna who had killed with his own hand and devoured every member of his family, including his mother! Under this hideous system, the population of these islands was threatened with rapid extermination, and

it required all the beneficent influences of the Catholic Faith to raise up and preserve the race.

It was on the island of Wallis, inhabited by cannibals such as these, that Father Bataillon, accompanied by one lay-brother, both totally ignorant of the language, landed in 1837. Fortunately for him and for the poor islanders, a chief befriended him when he landed, and was thus, by the laws of the country, bound to protect his life. Though, however, no one was allowed to kill him by violence, the natives, who suspected and detested him as an intruder, did all they could to drive him away, and nobody was allowed to supply him with food. He lived on what wild fruits and roots he could gather unmolested, and at one time kept himself from starvation by sharing some food thrown to the pigs. He was, in his own words, resolved to live so as to save the people: and he did. Such was the mighty power of the faith that in four years the whole brutal and cannibal population was Christian, converted by the unassisted labours of this one holy missionary. When, six years afterwards, in 1843, Father Bataillon was named Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania, Monseigneur Douarre, who was sent to consecrate him, found him still alone, and in such a state of destitution that he was half-naked, and without either hat or shoes.

At the time that the *Ark of the Covenant* first visited Wallis, scarcely ten years after Father Battaillon had landed on it all alone, there were three churches on the island, in which the Blessed Sacrament was reserved; and these natives, these former cannibals, had a wonderful devotion to our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, worshippers being found at His feet at every hour of the day and night. So fearful were they of even unintentional irreverence that, when the wind blew high, women, relieving each other, stood holding veils round the sanctuary lamps lest they should be blown out. Every Mass was attended by crowds, and after evening devotions in the churches, the families met at home to recite the rosary. Unlike the Protestant missionaries, who put down all native amusements with a high hand and pronounced both music and dancing to be sinful,

the missionary fathers encouraged every innocent recreation. The island teemed with the songs of the gay, light-hearted people, St. Peter and the Pope being the favourite and most inspiring themes of the native minstrels. So appreciative were the Wallisians of the blessings they enjoyed, that the young men came in numbers to Marceau's ship to ask to be employed in the conversion of other islands less favoured than their own. And yet so recent was their state of idolatry that each of these men bore on their persons the indelible stamp of it, having cut off the little finger of their right hand in honour of their gods.

The conversion of the island of Futuna by Blessed Peter Chanel, the first martyr of Oceania, is better known than that of Wallis. Accompanied by a lay-brother, and Thomas, an English interpreter, he was landed on the island of Futuna by Monseigneur Pompallier the day after Father Bataillon had been left there. Thomas was a Protestant, but he was not slow to open his heart to the truth, and was the martyr's first convert in the island. For two years the holy missionary lived unmolested, and even respected, studying the language and doing no work for souls except by baptising infants at the point of death. As soon, however, as he had sufficiently mastered the Futunian dialect, he began to preach the faith, and ere long a large number of natives put themselves under instruction. The king, Nihuliki, who was also high priest of the island, beheld this defection of his people with great anger, and did all he could, by starvation and petty persecutions, to drive Father Chanel from Futuna. He did not dare to resort to actual violence for fear of his subjects, who venerated the holy missionary. Having learnt, however, that his own son, Meitala, was among the catechumens, Nihuliki, in his rage, lost all sense of caution, and commanded that Father Chanel should be slain. The ruffians employed by him found the holy martyr in his little garden, and beat him to the earth with clubs. Then, seized with love of plunder, they left him, crushed and half dead, and rifled the mission house. It was only when they had satisfied their cupidity that they returned and put

an end to his long agony by cleaving his skull with an axe. "My death is nothing but gain to me," were his last dying words, and as the event proved, it was nothing but gain to his flock for which he shed his blood. The very step taken by Nihuliki to stamp out the faith was the means of its victory, for so fruitful was the blood of the martyr, that shortly after his death the whole island was converted, and when Father Servant was sent to take up Blessed Peter Chanel's work, the natives met him in crowds clamouring for baptism. Some of the most zealous converts were the very men who had shed the martyr's blood, though we do not hear that Nihuliki himself obtained the grace of conversion.

Thus one savage island after the other was won to the faith. The feebleness, poverty, and helplessness of the instruments chosen to preach it, and the marvellous readiness of the corrupt heathen to embrace it are wonderful. The supernatural aspect of the results of the Catholic missionaries' work is enhanced by its startling contrast to the futile labours of the heretical preachers, rich in the things of this world, but with whom, most evidently, God was not working. It is now almost as well known to Protestants as it is to Catholics how dismal was the failure of the unworthy Protestant missionaries sent to evangelize Oceania. England being ahead of all other countries in her discoveries and mercantile enterprise in the Pacific, the teachers of error, protected and subsidized by her, were unfortunately in the field before the teachers of truth, and in many places had the chance of poisoning the ground before the seed was sown. These missionaries betrayed the trust of those who had equipped and sent them out at great expense, and cared little or nothing for the souls of those whom they were paid to convert. Their only thought was to amass wealth and provide comforts for themselves and for their large families at the expense of the natives, and the only visible result of their contact with these last was that the islanders, without abandoning the vices of heathenism, adopted those of civilization. These hirelings, whose own the sheep were not, cared for the interests of their flock no more than

for their souls, and abandoned them in the hour of necessity if their own safety were in any way imperilled. It was thus that a chief of Savai, a nominal Protestant, reproached them for deserting him when invaded by an enemy. "A strange pigeon," he said, "came to our woods and charmed us with his song. Our chiefs built a beautiful cage for it, their sons fed it, and we cared for it and caressed it. But one day a noise frightened the stranger pigeon, and while the detested *popès* (Catholics) ran into the midst of the battle to pour the life-giving water on the wounds of the warriors, he—timid bird—escaped to a distance. In vain we cried out: 'Pigeon, come back!' The frightened pigeon would not come, but flew away with all its company."

It was this cowardice of the hirelings that procured for such savage tribes as the cannibals of Wallis, Futuna, Fiji, &c., the blessing of having the unadulterated word of God preached to them; whereas among such peaceful and gentle people as those of Tahiti, Tonga, &c., and wherever heresy had even passed by, tainting the air and poisoning the ground, the soil refused to bear fruit readily. It will be understood that the teachers of error hated the teachers of truth in the same way that beasts of the night hate the light of day; and they tried in every way to prejudice the minds of their flocks against them. They depicted the missionary fathers as cruel tyrannical men who would seize the land and enslave the people. They even went so far as to say they would carry off the women and devour the children, and they employed magic-lantern slides made with the most abominable pictures descriptive of the habits of the Catholic missionaries. No wonder that when any of the fathers arrived at a so-called Protestant island, the poor natives fled and hid themselves. On one occasion, when FF. Roudain and Violette landed on one of the Samoan islands, and had at last persuaded the poor frightened people to approach, they examined the new-comers most minutely, and walked round them to discover the tails and horns which they had been told they possessed. Of course, on every occasion preju-

dice and terror vanished under the influence of closer acquaintance. The struggle has been long, but in almost every instance, the faith has triumphed at last. "It is because the net of Peter is fit to catch fish," explained a young chief, who had tasted of both forms of Christianity. "The net of the heretics catches nothing, because Jesus Christ does not assist their fishing, and has not entered their ship!"

To return to Marceau. Having seen how isolated and abandoned the first missionary fathers were during their earlier labours, it is easy to appreciate the value of his services while he was in the Pacific. Each island in turn was visited by the *Ark of the Covenant*, which brought relief to those who were well-nigh worn out with toil, anxiety, sickness and solitude, and rescue to those who were in danger from the fierce and unconverted savages such as still existed in the New Hebrides. The very presence in these waters of the fine ship, with her strong and fervent crew, infused fresh life and energy into those exiles for Christ's sake, bringing them, as it did, once more into touch with the outer world, and their own superiors; and moreover it gave them greater importance in the eyes both of heathen and heretics. In a word, the work done by the ship and her crew proved the wisdom of Monseigneur Douarre's foresight, and has won for the labours of his instrument, Auguste Marceau, the title of apostolic.

There was a vigour and strength about this man's piety which endeared him to the missionaries, and acted on their dusky flocks as magnetically as it did on board his own ship, where, without either preaching or compulsion on his part, every man became a fervent and practising Catholic. He had a real love for the convert natives, regarding them simply as Christians, and having no national or colour prejudice. The terms of friendship and equality on which he met them, won their hearts and confidence, and called forth their finest qualities, just as the contempt with which the inferior races are usually treated by Europeans evokes a reciprocal contempt which they are afraid to show, and develops the deceit-

ful and baser side of their nature. There are few cases on record of mutual love more touching than that between Marceau and a young Wallisian convert named Salamone, who followed his white friend all over the Pacific, and finally back to France, their friendship being severed only by the death of Marceau. Salamone had gone into battle wearing a miraculous medal. A bullet which would have pierced his heart was stopped by the medal, the image of which was indelibly impressed on his flesh. This wonderful preservation of his life inspired the young Wallisian with a great devotion to Our Lady, which impelled him to attach himself to Marceau and the service of the missions.

Nobody could put himself under the influence of Marceau and not be devoted to Our Lady. Love for her and confidence in her protection were, it may be said, the ruling passion of his life. At the time of his conversion, when the world, the flesh and the devil were raging fiercely against him, he calmed his soul by making an absolute gift of himself to her, and confiding himself to her protection against his enemies. All through his Catholic life he styled himself "her slave," and his confidence in her care was unbounded. When first entrusted with the command of the *Ark of the Covenant* he, who had chosen the name borne by the vessel, gave complete charge of her and the work she was to do to Our Lady, nor, if we may use the expression did she belie the trust. In the eyes of the world the *Ark of the Covenant* bore a charmed life, which, while some attributed it to luck, and others to her captain's skill, Marceau attributed solely to Our Lady's care. As the ship sailed about over unknown seas, putting in at unknown islands, and steering through unknown channels with no chart to guide her, again and again she ran aground, and was as often safely got off again, sometimes against all human probability. Marceau was ever indefatigable in his duties, sparing himself in nothing and showing the way whenever the work was most severe; but while he worked he prayed, and his men put implicit trust both in his skill and in his prayers. In hours of imminent peril such as in a ter-

rible and memorable cyclone when the ship's rudder was carried away, so long as he was on deck the men feared nothing. When, afterwards, some one was expressing his wonder how the ship could have survived, one of the officers turning to Marceau said, with an air of polite flattery: "Ah, but we had a first-rate captain!" "The rosary did more than the captain," replied Marceau with a quiet smile.

One of his officers was, after the ship's return to France, appointed to a training-ship for boys at Nantes. Relating to them the events of that famous cyclone, he said: "Captain Marceau is the most perfect seaman I ever met. In that storm he was simply magnificent. Though he knew we had not much sea room, his calmness was such that when worn out with fatigue and knowing that for the sake of the ship's safety he must keep up his strength, he, after quietly telling me to call him at such and such a time, lay down and slept as soundly as if he had been on shore. When all was over we expressed our astonishment that he could have slept so peacefully. 'Did you forget,' he replied, 'that the Blessed Virgin was with us?'"

His day on board was such as to feed the supernatural life within him. There were always several missionaries on the ship, and therefore, except in bad weather, several Masses were said each day. These Marceau always served, regarding it as his prerogative. He received Holy Communion every day, which, for some reason, irritated some of the sailors. Having heard this, he addressed the crew on the subject. "Instead of being annoyed and scandalized," he said in conclusion, "you ought to be very glad, for if I did not receive Communion every day, very likely the first time one among you annoyed me I should throw him overboard!" "However," says the doctor who accompanied him and who was his intimate and devoted friend, "the lion was always there, under the lamb." This was true. He who had so completely mastered his violent temper as never, in spite of the habit of years, to utter an oath, could, or passing through a dangerous and intricate channel, when the man at the wheel put the helm the

wrong way, spring on the blunderer like a flash of lightning, and throw him right across the deck, while, taking the helm himself, he safely steered the ship.

Morning and evening he said prayers on board which all could attend who wished, and not one of the crew, whose duties did not keep him on deck, was absent. He also recited the rosary with the men, as well as with any natives who were there. Though he was a strict disciplinarian, and never lost his position, there existed a kind of paternal relationship between him and his men such as, perhaps, could have existed only on board a ship employed on that sort of semi-religious service. "We would one and all have died for him," is the testimony borne by one of his sailors.

Those years in Oceania were blessed to his own soul. The anxiety and gloom which had characterized the early days of his Christian life yielded to a great peace of soul, and a joyous and absolute dependence on God's will, which never left him. "It is God's will," was an habitual expression of his. "How can we wish things to be different." A Catholic friend who knew him intimately both before and after his Oceanic expedition writes thus about him: "During the first two or three years which followed Marceau's conversion an expression of struggle was painfully visible on his countenance; but when I saw him again later, his peace and deep calm astonished me, and I could scarcely have believed he was the same man."

He fully returned the affection borne to him by the Marist fathers, and intercourse with them was a source of great joy to him; and he began to have those yearnings for a religious life which it was not God's will should ever be satisfied. He loved to be with the missionaries, and as far as he could, share their life and religious observances. "O," he exclaimed while residing with the fathers at Annatom, where a mission had just been started, and everything was in a state of struggling poverty, "how happy I should be if I could serve as a simple lay-brother in your little kitchen!"

But the time came for Marceau to return to France. The ship had been nearly three years and a half on the

station, and more than four years absent from Europe; the crew had been kept away from home for a longer time than they had engaged for, and all hands were asking to return; the ship, moreover, was in need of repairs which could not be done in those savage parts. So it was that in January, 1849, the *Ark of the Covenant* set sail for France, amid universal lamentations, and loudly-expressed injunctions to return speedily. It was indeed Marceau's one idea to return to Oceania with all possible speed with a fresh ship and a fresh crew; but it was not God's will that he should ever again set eyes on the islands of the Pacific: he had done all that it was intended he should do for the missions there. After a voyage, shorter and more prosperous than her voyage out, the *Ark of the Covenant* anchored off Brest, and was paid off in July, 1849. It is interesting to know that the vessel which had been so specially dedicated to the service of God was not destined to serve for any lower purpose. She was bought by a mercantile firm, but foundered during the first trip.

It was not only the missionaries in the Pacific who valued the services of Marceau. The members of the Oceanic Company and all the Marist fathers in France were loud in their praises of the way in which he had carried out their wishes: there was even at one time question of a public ovation to welcome his return to France. This frightened his humility, and in a letter written to his mother during his voyage home he declares that he dreaded any marks of approbation with far more sincere terror than anything else that might befall him. Certain it is that if he prayed to be delivered from this danger, Almighty God heard his prayer, for from the time he landed in France until his death, about a year and a half afterwards, he was the object of the most unlooked-for abuse and disapprobation. His first action after his return set his employers against him. When the Oceanic Company was formed, he, as was said before, disapproved of the narrow, national and mercantile spirit which pervaded it. This sense of disapproval grew with his experience of its workings; and his strongly expressed desire to convert the Com-

pany into a society of a more disinterested and religious character, mortally offended his employers. As soon as he returned to France, he, with his usual promptness of action, called on the directors of the Company, laid before them his own views of reform, and announced his intention of retiring from their service unless his views were met. His suggestions were not taken, and the Company vented its sense of injury by freely criticizing the manner in which he had conducted its affairs; and, whether from ignorance or from malice, every kind of calumny was spread abroad as to his management, and even his honesty. While on one hand he was thus attacked from a business point of view, he was met from other quarters with censures which wounded him keenly. The religious world, comprising some really holy people whom Marceau venerated, and whose approbation he valued, blamed him severely for what they styled the eccentricity and exaggeration, and even the pride and hypocrisy of his views.

Having no desire to challenge the evil opinion formed of him, or disprove the accusations brought against him by the Company, he kept out of the world as much as he could. He lived for some time at Lyons, with the Marist fathers. He wished in this quiet retreat to calmly formulate his views about the Oceanic Company, and also to face, in the presence of God, the idea which was gathering strength in his mind, that it might be God's will that he should give up the world and join the Marist Order, and that if he returned to Oceania, it should be as a missionary. The memory left of his visit to their house, made a great impression on the fathers. The Superior General of the Order, whose headquarters were at Lyons, and who remained Marceau's loyal and devoted friend even when other fathers of the Order joined in the outcry against him, has left on record an account of the effect produced by him on the community. "On his face," he writes, "there was an expression of heavenly joy, and a look of peace and recollection, the very sight of which drew our hearts nearer to God." It was evident that Marceau's soul was ripening, and preparing itself for its last trials.

While he was residing with the Marist fathers, a suspicion as to the condition of his health forced itself on his friends. He was only forty-four years of age, but he was already an old man: indeed he had been known in Oceania by the name of "the old man"! The Superior General of the Marists formed an opinion that this premature old age might not be solely attributable to the wear and tear of interior conflict combined with hard work, and insisted on his consulting a well-known doctor. This physician discovered the existence of a disease, which in his opinion was fatal to the majority of those whom it attacked. When this verdict was broken to Marceau, his reply was characteristic: "I came to Lyons to try to learn God's will," he quietly said. "I have found what I wished, though not quite what I expected."

Ostensibly for his health he went to a distant village, in what part of France his biographers have left us in ignorance. There he spent months of solitude, dying by inches, though he himself knew it not any more than did his friends, who still pursued him with their well-meant advice and criticisms So little was anyone aware of the real state of his health that he was offered the governorship of Senegal, and his refusal of it added fuel to his friends' complaints of his eccentricity. This was not all. While the censures and harsh judgments of friends and foes deprived the last suffering months of his life of all exterior consolation, his soul was crushed by a terrible spiritual darkness and desolation. Still he never wavered in his absolute abandonment of himself to God's will. "O, how good God is," he would say, "to show me at last that there is only one thing to be desired on earth, even that God's will be done whatever happens!"

There is a little episode related of this period of his life which seems to show us how, at this time, disappointments met him everywhere, in small things as well as in greater, it not being, apparently, God's will that he should gather consolation from any human source. There was a certain religious of supernaturally holy life to whom people flocked for counsel; and to him,

Marceau, while still able to travel, went, hoping no doubt to gather comfort and strength from the holy man's words. But as soon as the simple religious learnt the name of his visitor, he talked to him about nothing but nautical matters, and especially about whale fishery! "Poor man," said Marceau, when relating the occurrence, and smiling at the memory of his disappointment, "he cared no more for whale fishery than I did!"

Though he was quite resigned to the thoughts of death, Marceau had such an overwhelming sense of being an unprofitable servant, that he could not think that his work was done, and that he was not to be given another chance of making up his deficiencies. Almost to the day of his death he felt confident that he should recover, and return to Oceania. His only trouble—if the word may be used of one so completely dependent on God's will—was as to the capacity in which he should return there, whether as a missionary priest, or, as before, in command of a ship. With a view to learning God's will, and making up his mind as to his religious vocation, he made a fifteen days' retreat at Notre Dame de Liesse, not a month before he died. There can be no doubt that this retreat hastened his death, but it brought him peace of mind, and a fixed belief that he was called to enter the Marist Order. He came to the conclusion deliberately, and fully realized the almost insurmountable difficulties which his age and previous education would place in the way of his studies for the priesthood. But his mind was made up, and he wrote to the Superior General to offer himself as his subject. His offer was conditionally accepted; but the letter which conveyed this tidings never reached his hands: his soul had passed away in his mother's house at Tours, before he could receive it. He died early in February, 1851.

It was, so to speak, accidentally that Marceau died in his mother's arms, while making her a passing visit on his way, as he confidently hoped, to the Marist noviciate. Had he foreseen the possibility of dying under these circumstances he would have avoided it, partly to save his mother pain, and partly to deprive her of the human joy of receiving his last breath. The intercourse

through life of this mother and son was very unique. She was the one and only person in the world for whom he felt real human attachment, but his love for her soul was so paramount that he took every opportunity of offering it the means of perfecting itself. He well knew her clinging, all-absorbing love for him, and on this account made himself to be an object of sacrifice to her, and rarely visited her, even when he could have easily done so. And she, whose one thought was love of him, responded nobly to his wishes, and rose triumphantly over nature. She herself relates how, but a short time before his death, he, to her great joy, sent for her to Paris, in order, as she fondly hoped, to nurse him and tend him. But as soon as she arrived he told her that he had arranged for her to make a retreat at a certain convent, whither she went at once, bravely and unflinchingly, and never betrayed by word or sign the keenness of her disappointment.

All this might kindle our indignation against her son, were it not for the strong love in his heart which underlay this stern spirit of sacrifice, and also for the evidence that his conduct was no common means of sanctification for her.

However, it was in her arms that he died, and it was she who received and treasured his last words. It might be said that the tenderness of God's love gave her that consolation which her son would have denied her, and in the memory of which she found all her joy for the rest of her life. "I know," she wrote pathetically after his death, "that there is a selfishness in my sorrow; but he was so necessary to my life and I did love him so much! You see how miserably weak I am, but anyone who knew my Auguste will pardon and excuse me. And please pray for me, that by submission I may be made worthy some day to join him where he is. Long, long ago I gave him to God, but in spite of that my love was too human, and God has imposed this sacrifice on me—and I hope that by His mercy I may make it generously."

After the death of her son, Madame Marceau entered the Third Order of Marists, Auguste having himself,

previous to his death, made all the arrangements for her admission.

Such were the life and death of Auguste Marceau. Unbeknown to himself, he led the van in a great religious reaction in the French Navy; and the fearless profession of faith, such as at the time of his conversion he alone dared to make was, before his memory had time to grow cold, considered as a matter of course by every Catholic officer. Men like Clerc, Joubert, de Plas and Bernaert, with whom their faith was the first object, came after him, and following in his steps infused a new and Catholic spirit into the Navy, which, it is to be hoped, endures to this day.

# St. Helen.

By M. E. James.

It was to St. Helen, the mother of the first Christian Emperor of Rome, that the great happiness was vouchsafed of discovering and restoring to the world the Cross on which our Saviour died. This favoured lady was of British origin, and it was natural therefore that she should be held in great veneration by the Welsh Chroniclers, and that the greatest treasure of the British people in the old days should have been the "Croes Naid," the Cross of Refuge, part of the real Cross, "brought into Britain by St. Neot, and treasured among the Regalia of Wales. This relic was gilded and adorned with precious stones, gold and silver" (this probably refers to the reliquary), "and was carried on great occasions before the Prince of Wales." *

But before we inquire further into the history of this particular relic, let us pursue the life of the great saint and Empress "Venerabilis et Piissima Augusta," who was permitted to find the source of these treasures.

Helen was born about the year 250. She was the

* Arch. Camb.

only daughter of Coël, a British king who resided at Colchester, which he made his capital, surrounded with walls, beautified in many ways, and named after himself, Coël-castra; the site of his house is still pointed out by the people of Colchester, who are justly proud of the great Empress, and who, in honour of her, still bear for their arms a cross between four crowns.

Coël lived on friendly terms with the conquering Romans, paying tribute to them for permission to rule in peace, and they on their part frightening off Goth, Viking, and Dane from that unprotected coast. Colchester was then, as now, an important military station, and we know that at one time part of the twentieth legion were quartered there; a very perfect little stone statue of a Centurion * was dug up out of a garden a few years ago, and is preserved in a private museum; the armour and all the details of the costume are most accurately given. It might indeed serve as a model for the young Roman officer, Flavius Constantius, who was quartered at Colchester about the time that the young Princess had blossomed into fair womanhood. Constantius appears to have been lodged in the palace, a very probable fact, considering his birth, for he was descended from the Emperor Claudius II., and from Vespasian, from whom he bore the prænomen Flavius. He had also another name, by which he is better known, according to the quaint Roman custom, still common in Italy, of adding some rather personal adjective to the proper nouns legally borne. In this case the adjective was Chlorus or pale, alluding no doubt to the young man's complexion. With regard to Constantius, however, it did not indicate ill-health; he was tall, well-made, and handsome, a good soldier, and devoted to his profession. It is not surprising that an attachment sprang up between the young people, and they were married, no doubt much to the satisfaction of the old king.

This marriage was for many years a very happy one;

* Marcus Favonius, surnamed *Facilis* or easy, *i.e.*, good-natured. The statue belongs to Mr. George Joslin, the owner of the museum.

their only child, a son, born at York, soon gave promise of his future greatness, and it is said Helen herself superintended his early education. Constantius Chlorus seems to have been truly attached to wife and child till a glittering bait was held before him, and his ambition triumphed over his affection.

It must be remembered that he was a pagan, and that it is only the Christian religion that has exalted woman and sanctified the contract of marriage. Some who call themselves Christians outside of the Catholic Church allow of divorce, and this sometimes for most trivial reasons: we cannot therefore be surprised that pagans had very lax ideas on this subject: and Constantius was by religion a philosopher.

In every respect, except in his repudiation of his wife, he showed himself a just man; and the well-known story of his treatment of his Christian servants proves him to have been possessed of an unusual amount of common sense. When the edicts against the Christians were ordered to be carried out in Britain, Constantius Chlorus had to publish the decree: he began with his own household. He read the imperial order, and required all his officers and servants to offer sacrifice to the gods or resign their posts: he gave them a few days to reflect and decide. At the appointed time and place they all assembled, and then severally made their decisions; we can picture the varied expressions in the faces of the crowd—avarice, cowardice, heroism, all plainly depicted—above all, the gleam of humour, that must have lighted up the pale face of Constantius as he watched them. When it was over, the Roman spoke shortly and decisively. All the men who had bartered conscience for place were dismissed from his service, but the pagans and the Christians he retained—in fact, his body-guard was entirely composed of the latter, so convinced was he of their loyalty.

But to return to his own want of loyalty to his wife, we must recollect that at this time there were two Emperors, Dioclesian and Maximian Herculeus, and

that they now, in A.D. 293, resolved to associate with themselves two Cæsars to assist in their wars and in the government of distant countries, and who should hold almost the position of heirs presumptive of the imperial dignity. Dioclesian chose Galerius on condition he would divorce his wife and marry the Emperor's daughter Valeria; Maximian selected Constantius, and he made a like condition: the new Cæsar must divorce Helen and marry Theodora, the widow of Maximian's son.

The bait was too tempting: the dignity of Cæsar at once, the imperial purple to follow, was too much even for a philosopher to resist; and Helen shortly found herself in the bitter and most undeserved position of a repudiated wife.

The character of St. Helen has always been remarkable for its quiet dignity, and no doubt she bore this cruel blow with patient fortitude; this we may safely assume, recollecting the task that was afterwards entrusted to her. But she had been for more than twenty years a wife when this divorce took place, in 293, and her son was not near her to console her with his devotion. His father had—much against his will—been obliged to send him as a hostage to Dioclesian, and the young prince was detained at Nicomedia, or wherever the Emperor chose to reside, as a pledge for his father's fidelity. Constantine grew up in the midst of his enemies, yet this had no bad effect on a naturally fine character, but probably only rendered him more manly and self-reliant.

Constantius lived about fourteen years after the divorce; for thirteen of them he reigned as Cæsar, and then, when Dioclesian was forced to put off the purple on May 1st, 305, for rather over a year Constantius Chlorus enjoyed the dignity of being Emperor; but during all that time his failing health and his son's absence tried him sorely. The persecution of the Christians, too, during the latter part of Dioclesian's reign, must have troubled him; but he was powerless to prevent it. The missioners of Pope Eleutherius,

who had been sent in answer to the appeal of King Lucius, in 169, had introduced the Faith of Christ into Britain. Even before that, Christianity had been brought to this island by some members of the family of Caractacus, who had been taken in chains to Rome, but liberated and kindly treated by Claudius, out of respect to whom the British chief gave his daughter Eurgain the name of Claudia. This lady married Pudens the younger, the son of the Senator Quintus Cornelius Pudens, at whose house on the Viminal (now the Church of St. Pudentiana), a most interesting group must often have assembled, comprising St. Peter, St. Paul, Linus, Cletus, Caractacus, his aged father Brân the Blessed, his daughter Claudia, Pudens, her husband, and their four children Timotheus, Novatus, Pudentiana and Praxedes, besides the master of the house and his wife Priscilla. Of these, some certainly returned to Britain to spread there the Faith they had learnt from the Prince of the Apostles: among them the old king Brân ap Llyr, Claudia, and Pudens, whose names are inscribed on the Chichester stone, and later on, their son Timotheus, a priest, who laboured for some years to spread the Faith, then returning to Rome, was martyred.

So there were many thousands of Christians in Britain at the time of Dioclesian, and many fine churches; Constantius pulled down the buildings, but tried, as far as he could, to spare the people, but in spite of him, blood flowed like water on every side.

In Caerleon alone ten thousand martyrs were slaughtered. As soon as he was Emperor, Constantius ordered these cruel edicts to be annulled in Britain. Perhaps it was because of this leniency, so unusual in a Roman Emperor, that a very great grace was granted to Constantius Chlorus before he died, the grace of Faith in the One True God. Whether St. Helen was with him in his last hours is not known, but it is stated that he longed greatly to see his eldest son. Theodora had borne him two sons and two daughters, but on his death-bed

his heart turned to his first-born. Constantine returned his father's devotion, and pleaded hard with Galerius to be allowed to return to Britain, but the Emperor was too jealous of him to allow him out of his sight. At length the young man—backed by a letter from his father which threatened war in case of refusal—extorted leave from Galerius to start next day for Britain. But Constantine did not wait for the next day. He set off at once, and few things are more exciting to read of than the young man's rush across Europe with an irate Emperor behind him, and before him—a dying father. He had truly reason for haste. Galerius was furious at his sudden departure; he had meant to find some excuse for stopping him on the morrow, or at the worst to have him intercepted in Italy by the Cæsar, Severus. But our British prince was too quick for him, and he was wily enough to take up all the horses at the various stages, so as to render an effectual pursuit impossible. We are told that Constantine was "well formed in mind and body," and both were certainly well tested in this gallop across a continent, with dangers on every side. Winds and waves were propitious to him, and he reached York in time to receive his dying father's blessing. Constantius recommended his son to his soldiers, and presented him to the assembled senators and councillors with these words:

"I leave you my son as my successor in this Empire. With God's assistance he shall wipe away the tears of the Christians, and avenge the tyranny practised against them. In this, above all, do I place my hopes of felicity."*

Surely that blessing—which was a prophecy—was worth the peril and fatigue of that quick ride.

Constantius died on the 25th of July, 306, and Constantine was at once saluted Emperor by the army. He was greatly beloved by the soldiers, being a thorough soldier himself, "with a genius for war," we are told; and Galerius dared not thwart the Legions, so he

* Soames, Britannia Antiqua, p. 314.

received the little laurel-crowned image of the new Emperor according to the Roman custom, though he affected to consider him only a Cæsar, not an Emperor. But this wretched man had nearly reached the end of his tether; he died a most fearful death, consumed by worms, in 311.

Now we reach the turning point in Constantine's life, and also in that of his mother, for it is said that her son's conversion led to hers, though if Eusebius had not expressly stated this, we should have been much more inclined to believe that she had been born a Christian, as so many of the Royal line had been since the time of Brân and Lucius. But Constantine was still, in the year 312, a pagan, or at least unbaptized, though we may believe his father's dying words uttered six years before sometimes haunted him. These six years had wrought a marvellous change in the life of Helen. No longer the repudiated wife, she now held the proud position of mother of the Emperor,—and her devoted son, as if to make up to her for past slights and sufferings, showered upon her honours and dignities. Medals were struck in her honour, "Flavia Julia Helena," and she was proclaimed Augusta (Empress) throughout the army —which meant throughout the known world. The prosperity of Constantine roused the jealousy of his colleagues, and Maxentius, son of the late emperor Maximian, declared war on him. The opposed forces met near Rome, Maxentius having a great numerical superiority. Constantine encamped his men near the Pons Milvius (Ponte Molle), two miles outside the present Porta del Popolo. This was the scene of perhaps the most wonderful and best attested miraculous appearance ever given to the world—for not only did the Emperor behold this manifestation, but it was seen by his whole army.

Shortly before noon on the 28th of October, 312, Constantine had knelt down—and doubtless his soldiers had followed his example—to invoke aid in his extremity. But whose aid? His mind turned to the God of the

Christians, of Whom his dying father had spoken, and he prayed to Him to reveal Himself and to give him victory. His prayer was answered suddenly and completely. There appeared in the sky—the broad sky overhanging the flat campagna broken by nothing but the great pile of Hadrian's Mausoleum and the columns and obelisks of Rome, for as yet the domes of the Churches were not,—in this wide sky there suddenly flashed out the sign of the Son of God; a cross of fire appeared in the blue, cloudless heavens, and underneath it, in Greek characters, were the words "*In hoc signo vinces*"—Through this sign thou shalt conquer.

On the following night he was ordered by our Lord in a vision to make a representation of the cross and the words, and to use it as an ensign in battle. This banner was the world-famous Labarum, so much dreaded by the enemies of the cross. Constantine, as we all know, gained a complete victory over Maxentius, who, in his flight across the Tiber, was drowned, being thrown into the water by the breaking of a bridge of boats. All these events have been painted by Raphael in the Sala of Constantine in the Vatican.

This decisive victory was hailed with joy in Rome, the Senate caused the Arch of Constantine to be erected in honour of the conqueror, and a statue of him in armour holding a large cross was also set up, with this inscription on the base: "By this salutary sign, the mark of true courage, I have delivered your city from the yoke of tyranny, and restored the senate and people of Rome to their ancient glory."

Eusebius says that the Empress Helen followed her son, and about this time became a Christian: she was now over sixty years of age, but her vigour of mind and body were unimpaired, and she assisted the Emperor in all good works: widows and orphans were helped, maidens were portioned, the poor—pagans and as well as Christians—were cared for, and churches were built. Among these were the splendid one at Nicomedia, the "Golden Church" at Antioch, built in the form of an

octogon, and the beautiful church of the Twelve Apostles at Constantinople, which "was vastly high; yet had all its walls covered with marble, its roof overlaid with gold, and the outside covered with gilded brass instead of tiles."* Helen had a palace in this city, in which she resided after her son had become Emperor of the East as well as of the West by his victories over Licinius. He prepared himself for these battles by prayer and fasting; his standard, the imperial Labarum, was carried before his army, and his soldiers triumphed beneath the banner of the Cross, especially at Adrianople, and in the great battle of Chalcedon, in 324, which rendered him absolute master of the world.

These victories in the East prepared the way for what was to be the great object of St. Helen's life, that life which, in spite of her exalted station, was so hidden that it is difficult to find out the exact facts about it, except in the last act of it. In 326, being the twenty-first year of Constantine's reign, the thirteenth of the pontificate of Sylvester, and the first after the first General Council of the Church at Nice, St. Helen was divinely inspired to go to the Holy Land, and search for the Cross of Christ, that Cross whose appearance in the sky had converted her son, and whose image on the banner had led him to victory. Despite the weight of nearly eighty years, St. Helen hastened to obey, and, with the resources of the Roman Empire at her feet, found no difficulties except her own age and infirmity. When she arrived at Jerusalem she was welcomed gladly by the holy bishop Macarius, to whom Constantine had written of the search to be made for the holy Cross, and of the building of a magnificent church on Mount Calvary. The aged Empress spared no pains to find out where the Cross might be buried, for the place was not then known, and she consulted many persons as to the most probable spot where to begin the excavations; she was advised to discover the position of the Sepulchre, as it was the Jewish custom to dig a large hole near the

* Eusebius.

place where a malefactor was buried, and to throw into it all the instruments of his execution—these being unclean. Helen succeeded in discovering where the Sepulchre was, though the place had been completely concealed by the Jews, a very large heap of stones and earth having been heaped over it, the whole being surmounted by a large statue of Venus, so that any respect given to this holy place by the Christians might appear to be paid to the heathen goddess whose cultus was of all others the most removed from the pure precepts of Christ. The Emperor Hadrian had set up this statue. "This he did as conceiving that the root and foundation of the Church would be destroyed if idols were worshipped in those places where Christ was born in order to suffer." *

In the end, the statue served a good purpose by directing the attention of the seekers of the Cross to the right spot. An army of workmen was ordered to throw down the Venus and clear away the great mound. Earth, stones and statue were thrown into the valley beneath, and after digging to a great depth, they were rewarded by discovering the holy Sepulchre, and soon after, near it the three crosses which had lain there for nearly three centuries. This took place on the 3rd of May, 326.

We can imagine the joy of the Empress and of the Bishop, and all the Faithful at this sight. But a difficulty still remained; there were three crosses, and though the title, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" cut in Hebrew, Greek and Latin letters lay near, yet it was not attached to either cross, and the mark of the nails which had fixed it was not considered sufficient proof. A lady belonging to one of the chief families in Jerusalem, lay dying in that city, and the holy Bishop Macarius caused the three crosses to be carried to her house, and after earnest prayer that God would reward their faith, he applied the crosses in succession to the dying woman. The two first pro-

* St. Paulinus, Epist. ii.

duced no effect, but at the touch of the true Cross she was healed. She rose, restored to health and life, by one touch of the "blessed wood, by which justice cometh." *

Thus "without difficulty Elen found the cross of Christendom." St. Ambrose says: "She adored not the wood, but the King, Him Who hung on the wood. She burned with an earnest desire of touching the remedy of immortality."

Death and sin had come into the world by the fruit of the wood, plucked by Eve. Life and love were the gifts of the divine fruit hanging on the wood, Jesus born of Mary. The gratitude and love of Helen took an outward form—as true things usually do—in the beautiful church which she immediately began to build over the holy place where these relics had been found, and which was called the Basilica of the Holy Cross. It extended over a very large area, and one chapel of it stood over the cavern given by Joseph of Arimathea for the burial of our Lord's Body, and this was called the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the rock Golgotha, and the very place where the Cross had stood was covered by this great building, which Constantine enriched with many treasures. Its greatest treasure was the large piece of the Cross which, enclosed in a rich silver shrine, St. Helen gave to the care of St. Macarius and his successors. At the completion of the great church of the Holy Cross, this relic was placed there with the utmost solemnity on the 14th of September, 335.

This feast, called the Exaltation of the Cross, is still and always has been kept by the Catholic Church. The feast of the Finding † of the Holy Cross is held on the day when it occurred, on the 3rd of May, and has been so held from the time of its happy discovery by our country-woman.

* Wisdom xiv. 7.

† Sometimes called the Invention. The meaning of the Latin word *invenire* has been partly perverted in English; it signifies *to discover*.

Another part of the Cross she carried to her son at Constantinople, who received it with great veneration, and the third part she bore to Rome, where she caused the church "of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem" to be built to receive this treasure—where it still remains: she also brought earth from Jerusalem of which part of the floor is composed. But the aged Empress did not live to see the completion of any of these works. When the third portion of the Cross was safely deposited in the capital of the world, St. Helen rested from her labours. She died in the arms of her son on the 18th of August, 326, on which anniversary her feast is kept.

She appears to have breathed her last in a palace outside Rome, for Eusebius says that her son caused her body to be conveyed to the city with royal magnificence. Her remains were interred with the utmost pomp in the vast mausolæum on the Via Labicana, about one mile and a half from the Porta Maggiore, on the way to Palestrina; this place is now called Torre Pagnatarra; she was buried in a large sarcophagus—the largest known—of red Egyptian porphyry; it was removed by Anastasius IV. (about 1150) to the Lateran; and from thence to the Vatican, where it now is, by Pius VI. (about 1775). It is covered with high-reliefs representing a battle—no doubt that of Pons Milvius, portraits of St. Helen and Constantine, and other subjects. It was much damaged when removed to the Vatican, and the restoration of it cost £20,000, which gives an idea of its value. The ashes of St. Helen are said to be kept in a rich shrine under the Altar of the Chapel dedicated to her in the church of the Ara Cœli—a singular proof of the triumph of Christianity over Paganism, for this church on the Capitol occupies the site of the Temple of Jupiter—whose statue on Mount Olivet Helen had cast down when at Jerusalem—and the Altar in her chapel stands just where the *Ara primogeniti Dei* was erected, the altar placed there by Augustus in consequence of the prophecy of the Cumæn Sibyl

regarding the birth of our Lord. Jupiter was overthrown and the unknown God had revealed Himself.

The personal character of Helen scarcely requires comment, the fact that she was selected by God for so great a work is enough. Yet we may particularly note her modesty and humility. Though she was, during the latter part of her life and in her death, surrounded by the pomp and magnificence required by her rank and the loving care of her son, yet in herself she was one of the humblest of the servants of Christ. Eusebius says: "In the sight of all she continually resorted to the churches, and she adorned the sacred buildings with the richest ornaments and embellishments, not passing by the chapels of the meanest towns, appearing amid the women at prayer in a most humble garment." Rufinus calls her faith and holy zeal incomparable, and St. Gregory the Great says she "kindled a like fire in the hearts of the Romans." She built a convent for holy virgins at Jerusalem, and "though empress of the whole world, and mistress of the empire, she looked upon herself as servant of the hand-maids of Christ."

A very human touch in St. Helen was the interest she took in soldiers and the great kindness she showed them. Perhaps her memory took her back to the happy days in Colchester, when her soldier-lover appeared in the midst of the twentieth legion.

The three portions of the Cross were, as we have seen, deposited by St. Helen herself at Jerusalem, Constantinople, and Rome: the title—a piece of wood a foot long, the surface whitened, the inscription cut in it in red letters in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin—she gave to the same church in Rome, the Holy Cross: one of the nails was placed in the diadem of the Emperor, surrounded with pearls, which he only wore on very solemn occasions; another his loving mother had fixed in a jewelled bridle to be used when he went into battle; the third she cast into the Adriatic when, in great danger of shipwreck, while on her way from Constantinople to Rome accompanied by the Emperor—and the storm

ceased. St. Gregory of Tours says that up to his day sailors considered that sea as holy, and entered it with prayer and fasting. The lance was found with the cross and was kept at Jerusalem, as Ven. Bede and other writers mention; it was afterwards taken to Rome, but the point is in the Sainte Chapelle at Paris.

Much misconception arises from a false idea of the size of these relics, and most of the people who indulge in jokes of the "three-decker" description have never seen a relic of the Holy Cross, and consequently do not know what tiny fragments these are. We should be sorry to have to set to sea in a frigate constructed of pieces of wood the size of all the united relics of the Cross; Robault Fleury measured all he could find, and his work on the subject makes it morally certain that not one third of the True Cross is now to be found in the whole world. There is wood enough in the Cross for the bark of Peter—and safer sailing in it than in the three-decker of lively imaginations.

We have already referred to the relic of the Cross—the Croes Naid—which our British forefathers regarded as their greatest treasure and of which they deplored the loss when "Einion ab Ivor, Davydd ab Gronwy and others, having betrayed their prince, Davydd, brother to the last Llewelyn, to Edward I. then at Ruddlan Castle, brought him to the English Monarch, together with the Regalia, amongst which was the Croes Naid and the Crown of King Arthur." "And so," observes the English chronicler on the subject, "the glory of the Welsh, though against their will, was transferred to the English."* Edward conveyed these in great solemnity to Westminster Abbey, attended by the Archbishop of Canterbury and his suffragans, dressed in their sacred

* The following extract from the Welsh Rolls II., Edward I., m. 1. refers to this affair: "Pro Anyano filio ynor et aliis qui detulerunt ad regem partem illam pretiosisimi ligni Crucis quæ a Wallensibus vocatur Croys seneyht (Croes i Naïd) habeant hanc libertatem quod non teneantur in aliquo exercitu regis sequi extra quatuor cantreda."

robes, and a vast number of people. He there placed them on the High Altar, probably as offerings, as his son Alphonso had before done with the ring of Llewelyn and other jewels These latter were taken to adorn the tomb of Edward the Confessor; but what became of the others is not known."*

Once more a relic of the true Cross has been brought into Wales,† in place of that so lovingly treasured and so bitterly lamented by the faithful countrymen and sons of St. Helen. The people of every land honour her for the gift she bestowed upon Christendom. The Universal Church gives her the title of saint as well as "most pious and most venerable empress." And yet, in her own land, among the descendants of her own family and tribe, her name is scarcely known, and her great work, if thought of at all, scoffed at. May the attraction of the cross yet make itself felt, even by the most stubborn and the most sceptical.

Some persons have advanced the theory that St. Helen was a native of Bithynia, apparently for the reason that Drepanum, a town in that country, was named by Constantine, Helenopolis, and was also exempted from taxation, but this was done in honour of a saint and martyr whose memory both the Emperor and his mother held in veneration, St. Lucian. Constantine probably knew him personally, for he was in Nicomedia in 303, and it is said that he was examined by Dioclesian himself; at all events, he made a glorious confession of the Faith, and was cruelly martyred after a long imprisonment. He was buried at Drepanum.

As to the country of St. Helen, the British origin of herself and her son is constantly alluded to by old writers, British and Roman; for instance, on the marriage of Constantine and Fausta, the panegyrist said: "He (Constantius Chlorus) had freed the provinces of

* Arch. Camb.

† It is now placed in the newly-erected Church of the Holy Rood at Tenby.

Britain from slavery; you ennobled them by your origin." The British form of the name is Elen, and it is still a favourite one among her country-women. All her youth was spent in her native land; after she became Empress, she resided chiefly at Rome, at Constantinople, or at Trèves, where the Emperors had a palace. Wherever she dwelt, her presence was marked by the springing up of churches around her, as at Trèves, Bonn, and other places in Germany, and the memory of the holy Empress is greatly venerated in these towns even now, fifteen hundred years after her death.

Her son had several statues sculptured in memory of her; one of these, in which she is standing by a large cross, he placed in the centre of a great square in Constantinople; this statue, it is needless to say, no longer exists. But as long as the Church lasts—that is, to the end of the world, St. Helen's name will be dear to Catholics of every country under the sun, and they will be grateful to her for the work she accomplished on the 3rd of May, 326, when she found the Cross of Christendom.

[The authorities consulted in preparing this pamphlet :—Alban Butler, Cambria Sacra, Archeologia Cambrensis, Bede, and the Welsh Triads.]

# Adolf Kolping,

*The Apostle of Working Men.**

(1815-1865.)

BY ELLIS SCHREIBER.

THE Associations for Catholic working men and apprentices, which are a powerful agent for good throughout the length and breadth of Austria and Germany, owe their origin and development to the zeal and energy of a man who, in his early years a poor shoemaker's apprentice, became through divine grace the apostle of the class from which he sprang.

Adolf Kolping, the humble instrument chosen by God for the accomplishment of a great work—a work of rapid growth, wide-spread usefulness, and permanent duration,—was only twelve years of age when he left home to learn a trade. His parents were pious people, very poor, living by the labour of their hands and the produce of a few acres of land which they owned at Kerpen, a small country town not far distant from Cologne. Impoverished as they were by a succession of bad seasons, and the miseries brought on the country by

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the war in the early part of the century, they were unable to give their children a good education, and thus Adolf was taken from school as soon as he was of an age to earn. He was a boy of slight build, not very robust, ill fitted by nature for the field labour in which his father and elder brothers were employed. In consequence of this it was determined that, instead of following the plough on the lands of some neighbouring farmer, he should be apprenticed to a shoemaker in the town.

It was a sorrowful day for Adolf when he reluctantly put on the leathern apron, and seated himself at the shoemaker's bench. Not that he felt any repulsion to the trade, or to the worthy man who was to instruct him in it: the cause of his sadness was that all his cherished hopes and aspirations seemed doomed to disappointment. He was a quiet boy, of quick intelligence and retentive memory, fond of reading, and a great favourite with the village schoolmaster, on whose lips he used to hang with eager attention when he told him of men who had risen from a lowly station and made their way to fame and fortune; or, better still, by their piety and diligent application to study, had fitted themselves for the sacerdotal state. Many a time the school-master had begged Adolf's parents, at whatever cost to themselves, to educate him for the priesthood; and the boy, too, had earnestly entreated that he might be allowed to pursue his studies. And indeed the good people themselves desired nothing better. His fond mother could picture to herself no greater delight than to see her son stand at the altar of God, to receive from his hands the Bread of Angels; to think that on her death-bed she would hear his lips utter the *Profisciscere*, and know that he would offer the Holy Sacrifice for the repose of her soul. But what was to be done? Look which way they would, the means were not forthcoming: no wealthy benefactor could be found who would undertake to provide for the

boy, and the monasteries where young students were taught for the love of God had been suppressed at the Revolution. So there was nothing for it but to submit to the divine will.

Young Kolping saw, as he thought, the golden gates of happiness close behind him for ever, as he applied himself with a heavy heart to learn his trade. How he got on with it we can not say; we only know that in later years, when addressing the members of the workman's club, he often used to make them laugh heartily by his description of the first pair of boots he made for his father. When with great difficulty he had succeeded in getting them on, they could not be got off again, so badly were they manufactured. After he had served his apprenticeship, Adolf worked at one shop or another in the vicinity of his home until the death of his mother, which took place in 1833. Then he made up his mind to go to Cologne; for he thought he should get on better if he could obtain employment in a large house of business. There, too, he fancied he should find companions of a similar stamp to himself: good workmen, industrious at their trade, and men of some intelligence, with a taste for better things, not wholly engrossed in material interests, like the agricultural labourers around his native place.

Alas! although this town offered many advantages for attaining proficiency in his trade, in other respects Adolf found himself sorely disappointed. He was shocked at the moral depravity, the gross ignorance, of the men with whom he was brought into daily intercourse. The ideas he had formed of the intellectual and religious condition of the working classes in towns were rudely dispelled, and well was it for him that he was not led to follow the evil examples he saw around him. Thanks to the grace of God and the sound religious training of his early youth, he was enabled to stand firm and resist temptation. In a great measure, too, the memory of his good mother, to whom he had been

fondly attached, was a safeguard to preserve him from the taint of moral corruption. He had vowed, as he stood beside her coffin, that she should never be ashamed of her favourite son; and he would not break his promise. His love for his mother led him to seek consolation and aid from another Mother, the Help of Christians. Daily might the young man be seen kneeling at the feet of a miraculous image in the Church of Our Lady in the *Kupfergasse*, asking for help and guidance, renewing his resolution to lead a holy life, praying for the accomplishment of his dearest hope, that of consecrating himself to God in Holy Orders. For of this Kolping never despaired, impossible as it seemed of fulfilment, but humbly trusted that God would bring it about in His own good time.

Every shilling he could save went in the purchase of books, and every moment at his command was devoted to reading. He even took his book with him to the workshop, and laid it open by his side, so as to cast his eyes on it if he happened to leave off work for a single moment,—a proceeding for which his master more than once found it necessary to administer a sharp rebuke. All the evenings, and oftentimes late into the night, by the feeble light of a candle, he pored over his books, devouring all that came in his way—lives of saints and other biographies, travels, history, sermons, devotional books, and stories. He had not, however, lost the love of nature that seldom forsakes those who have been born and brought up in the country. On Sundays, after vespers, he used to take a long walk to the top of a hill in the neighbourhood; and there, seated upon the turf, he would contemplate the scene before him, and in solitude and silence raise his heart to the God of nature, until the Angelus bell, sounding in the distance, roused him from his musings, and warned him that it was time to turn his steps homeward.

So distasteful did Adolf Kolping find the forced

association with his fellow-workmen, whose manner of thought and way of life were entirely antagonistic to his own, that he began to look out for a situation in a smaller establishment, where he would be left more to himself. Before long he was fortunate enough to be taken into the employ of a respectable, well-to-do tradesman, who kept a very unpretentious bootshop, and did not care to enlarge his business, as he had regular customers for whom he worked, and was in easy circumstances. Besides an apprentice, he employed only one assistant, who lodged in the house. This arrangement suited Kolping admirably. The room assigned to him was an attic, light and airy, where he might spend all his free time in undisturbed enjoyment of his books. The family consisted of his master—an elderly man,—his wife, and a daughter about twenty years of age. After a few weeks the new comer was quite at home in the house; he pleased his master, and still more his master's wife, who took a great liking to him, and treated him with the greatest kindness.

"Adolf," she said to him one day, "do not trouble yourself to put your room in order before you go down to the shop. My daughter and I will do it for you with pleasure, while you go out to get a little fresh air. It pains me to see you look so pale and tired."

"Mother," interposed the daughter, "why should we not give him one of the empty rooms on the second floor, where he would have more space and be more comfortable?"

"Well said, Marianne!" rejoined her mother. "That we will. To-morrow his effects shall be moved downstairs."

Kolping felt somewhat embarrassed at being made so much of.

"I like my attic immensely, and I would not exchange it for a room in a palace," he said. "I have a beautiful view from the window by day, and at night I can amuse myself with counting the stars."

At this moment the father came up.

"Nonsense!" he said. "How is any one to sleep who counts the stars at night?"

This settled the question. On the following day Kolping was installed in his new room.

This was by no means the only attention shown him by the good people. They did not seem to know how to make enough of him. Many a time the mother, when she found herself alone with him, would tell him that, as her husband was getting old, they thought of putting the business into other hands, and ask if he knew of a suitable person, hinting very plainly that the individual she was addressing was the one they would most gladly make their successor. On these occasions Adolf always contrived to put the matter aside with a joke; but it was not so easy to do this when one day his master spoke to him seriously, saying that he regarded him with the affection of a parent, and that he asked nothing more than that he should take the business and marry Marianne, who was a good girl, steady and industrious, who would make an excellent wife. If Kolping would make up his mind to do this, the old man said he should die content, and would leave him the house and all that he possessed.

It was a hard trial to Adolf to refuse the good fortune offered to him, and harder still to grieve the worthy people, who had shown him nothing but kindness, and to whom he was sincerely attached. But he felt that he owed his services to another Master; one who would repay them not with the good things of this life—its riches, its pleasures or its honours,—but with an imperishable and eternal reward. After a short but sharp struggle, having sought and obtained supernatural assistance, he went to his master and said:

"Will you let me speak quite unreservedly to you, sir?"

"That is what I wish above all things," he answered. "I shall be glad, my dear fellow, to have matters settled and my mind put at rest."

"Well, then, sir, you must please get another workman. I cannot stay with you any longer."

This was a sad blow for the good man. His work fell from his hands, he dropped into a chair.

"What, Adolf!" he said, in dismay. "You cannot mean to leave us? For goodness' sake do not break my heart!" Then he called to his wife: "Here is bad news for us, mother! Adolf wants to leave us."

"Mercy on us!" cried the old woman, hastening forward. "What in the world has happened?"

Behind her appeared her daughter, with a troubled and anxious countenance.

"Do not distress yourself," Adolf said, gently. "You have treated me like your own son; you wished to provide for my future; you were even willing to give me your daughter, an angel of goodness, who would have made me the happiest of men. But God wills it otherwise: He calls me to His service,—it is my intention to become a priest."

An exclamation of astonishment and dismay broke from the lips of those whom he was addressing; but they made no attempt to dissuade him from his purpose. The old father bowed his head in silent resignation; the mother pressed her lips respectfully and fondly to the hand of the future priest; Marianne withdrew sobbing to her room.

Troubles and trials began for Kolping from the day that he bade farewell to his kind friends, and left the shelter of their hospitable roof. Mental anxiety, and the difficulty he experienced in procuring regular employment, brought on a severe illness, and he was compelled to return home to recruit his shattered health. When he was convalescent, he paid a visit to the parish priest to acquaint him with his project, and ask his aid in carrying it out. But the good old vicar who had known and encouraged Adolf's aspirations was dead; and his successor saw in the applicant only another of the class of idle youths who, when tired of their work

or unsuccessful in it, imagine that they have a vocation to the priesthood. He had seen several instances of this, and of the unhappy results consequent on encouraging them.

Disappointed but not disheartened by this rebuff, Adolf opened his mind to his father. But no help was to be had in that quarter; in fact, the old man thought that his son, now twenty-two years of age, ought to assist him in his declining years. Then Kolping bethought himself of another priest in the neighbourhood, well known for his charity. He went and asked counsel of him. He was advised to return to his work in Cologne, and, in preparation for future studies, to employ himself during his free time in acquiring a thorough knowledge of Latin grammar. Kolping acted on this advice. It was hard work at first; but, by means of diligent application and a little instruction, he advanced sufficiently to be able in the following year to enter the third class in the public Gymnasium of Cologne.

Few can estimate aright the trials and hardships that a penniless student has to encounter when he enters comparatively late in life on a course of study. The severe mental application, the long hours of reading, tell upon the eyesight and health of one accustomed to manual labour; while, with the best of wills, the effort to have the meagrest pittance suffice for his daily needs, the dependence on the charity of others, the humiliation of sitting on the school-bench with boys half his age and merciless in their jests make learning a weariness to the spirit as well as to the flesh. In spite of all difficulties and privations, however, Kolping struggled on. He had been born on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception; and our Blessed Lady, who had preserved him from the seductions of vice and enabled him to resist the allurements of a comfortable married life, watched over him still, and provided for his wants in a wonderful manner.

One night a note was brought to his lodgings, written

in an unknown lady's hand, begging him to go at once to a narrow street near the Cathedral. It was Kolping's birthday, December 8. The snow lay upon the ground and the cold was intense. The young man hesitated whether he should obey the summons. It might prove to be some snare laid for him ; at any rate, he might be going on a fool's errand. However, he determined to go ; and, commending himself to his Immaculate Mother, he started on his way, though not without some inward trepidation. On arriving at the house indicated, he was directed to ascend a narrow staircase, at the top of which was a miserable apartment, lighted by the flickering flame of an oil lamp. A strange scene here met his eye. Amid the most poverty-stricken surroundings, a lady, young and beautifully dressed, plunged in the deepest grief, was kneeling beside the bed whereon lay a young man evidently in his last agony. She rose as Kolping entered ; and, addressing him by name, implored him by all he held most dear to watch over the dying man until he breathed his last, as she could remain with him no longer. Placing a considerable sum of money in his hands to defray the expenses of the funeral, she bade him farewell, and, with a last fond look at the dying man, hastily left the house. Adolf felt bewildered, as he did not know what to make of this mystery. Approaching the bed, he recognized in the prostrate form upon it a young man from the neighbourhood of his own birthplace, a former school-fellow of his, who had entered a theological college in Bonn, and had subsequently fallen into evil ways. Kneeling beside him, he recited the Rosary and the prayers for the departing. In a few hours all was over. Adolf performed the last offices for his whilom friend, and followed his remains to the grave. Then the approaching examinations chased all other thoughts from his mind for a season.

The time came for Kolping to leave the Gymnasium and enter the University. The means of support were utterly lacking to him ; the only hope was that, through

the advocacy of an influential friend, he might be admitted gratuitously into some college in Belgium. Providence ordained otherwise for him. One day when he was at home, recovering from an attack of small-pox, caught through nursing a sick comrade, a lady, the daughter of a wealthy landowner in the vicinity, called on his father. In her Adolf instantly recognized the mysterious stranger who had committed to his care the young man who was dying in Cologne. During her visit she made no allusion to her previous interview with him, but on leaving asked him to accompany her a short distance. She then asked him if he remembered that night, and told him that the unhappy man whose end he witnessed had been her brother's tutor, and that she had become deeply enamoured of him. Partly perhaps through her influence, but chiefly through his own fault, he had lost his vocation, and ruined himself by his excesses. On hearing that he was dying, she had hastened to Cologne, in the hope of inducing him to make his peace with God. In this she had been successful; and since she was unable to remain with him to the last, she had sent for Kolping. Thanking him for his charity, she proceeded to say that in expiation of her ill-regulated affection for the unhappy seminarist, and for the repose of his soul, she had made a vow to pay the expenses of a poor student at the University. For whom should she do this if not for Adolf? He accepted the proposal with heartfelt joy. One stipulation only he made—that no restriction should be placed on his studies, nor as to the post he should accept after ordination.

Kolping passed three years at the University of Monaco in Bavaria, and a fourth year at a training college in Cologne, in special preparation for his clerical duties. In April, 1845, at the age of thirty-two, he had the happiness of being ordained priest. But in this world joy and sorrow go hand in hand: scarcely had he left the church, the sacred chrism still upon his

consecrated hands, when he was called to the death-bed of his father. When he arrived, the good old man had expired. During a lingering illness it had been the one hope and desire of his heart to live to see his son a priest. This was denied him; but the night before his death he was consoled by a dream, in which he beheld the church brilliantly lighted up and magnificently decorated; while, amid the songs of angels and clouds of incense, his son Adolf stood at the altar in vestments of gold, in the act of elevating the Sacred Host. Thus God, in His goodness, vouchsafed to fulfil the desire of one who had served Him in simplicity and sincerity.

In the summer of the following year, on the Festival of Corpus Christi, two young artisans stood watching the solemn procession, as it wended its way through the streets of Elberfeld, an important manufacturing town of Rhenish Prussia. They were Catholics, and consequently no strangers to processions of this kind, yet never before had the spectacle impressed them so deeply. As the different schools of the town passed before them in gala dress, wearing their distinctive badges and carrying banners, one of the men turned to his companion and said: "Why should we not have something of this sort on St. Laurence's Day?" (August 10 was at that time a holyday for the lower orders.) "Nonsense!" replied his friend. "Would you have us dress up in white and carry flowers like those children?" "Of course not," rejoined the other; "but what a good effect it would have if we got together a number of apprentices, and made them walk two and two, carrying tapers, with a banner or two, and singing something the while!" The idea pleased his companion; and, since the procession was by that time over, they turned their steps to the presbytery to obtain clerical approval of their project.

Elberfeld, at the commencement of the century a small country town, had by the time of which we speak become a large manufacturing city. The Catholic population was rapidly increasing, but it was far out-

numbered by the Protestants and free-thinkers, who waged constant war against the faith. The clergy were desirous to avail themselves of every means of promoting the practice of religion amongst the working men, who formed a large proportion of the inhabitants of Elberfeld; consequently the priest to whom the two young men applied encouraged them heartily. He suggested that the association should be placed under the protection of the Blessed Virgin, and that the procession should take place on the 15th of August, the day of her glorious Assumption, instead of on the 10th. If they would find the men, he said, he would provide the banners. His colleague, Father Kolping, knew a painter who would paint them a picture of Our Lady, and one of St. Joseph too, the special patron of working men. To form a choir was no difficulty. Several artisans, among them the two friends, were accustomed to meet on Sunday evenings in the workshop of a good old man, to chat together over a glass of beer, and listen to the tales of adventure which their host, an old salt, loved to relate. Music also formed part of the entertainment; for the old man played the violin, and to its accompaniment many a part-song was learned and sung,—aye, and sung well too; for where is the German artisan who does not possess an ear for music and a voice to sing the sweet ballads of the fatherland? The parish schoolmaster lent willing aid, and soon the praises of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph resounded in the humble workshop, until a more suitable place of assembly for the infant association was provided.

No one was more active in promoting its growth than Adolf Kolping, whose first appointment had been to the junior curacy of the principal church in Elberfeld. When the schoolmaster brought the table of rules that he had drawn up for his approval, Father Kolping turned on him a countenance beaming with delight. "May God prosper this good work!" he said. "You have realized the dream of my life." Soon after he

became the president and chaplain of the association, which, once started, rapidly assumed large proportions. A sodality was formed for apprentices (a large and important class in Germany) and young workmen between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, whose members were to meet every Sunday and holyday for religious instruction, to approach the Sacraments at regular intervals, and on weekday evenings to assemble for harmless and profitable recreation, such as music, lectures, reading, etc. When, in 1848, the wave of Revolution swept over the continent of Europe, proof was given of the stability of the work thus inaugurated; for in Elberfeld all the members of the sodality—and they were by that time a numerous body—resisted the influence of the baneful doctrines then widely disseminated, and stood by the clergy in the defence of religion and social order.

Persuaded of the vast amount of good that might be effected among the working classes were institutions like that of Elberfeld established in other large towns, Father Kolping wrote a pamphlet expounding the object of the association, and appealing to fellow-labourers in the Lord's vineyard to aid him in spreading this good work. He spoke of the important place the working classes held in the social fabric; the state of physical misery, moral degradation, spiritual abandonment, in which they often live; and their need of guidance and help to rise superior to the difficulties of their lot and the dangers that surround them. He urged priests to provide for the working classes "a habitation of peace," where the young, the friendless, the ignorant, the erring, would find assistance, protection, instruction, support; and where they would be formed to the practice of Christian virtue and the exercise of fraternal charity.

This pamphlet was widely circulated, and well received by the German clergy. To be the apostle of the working classes, the friend and father of the artisan and

apprentice, was the work for which God had called Father Kolping, and zealously he fulfilled his mission. It would be impossible to relate the great things Divine Providence accomplished by means of this humble instrument, or to enumerate a hundredth part of the clubs, *cercles*, sodalities and associations which in Germany and the neighbouring countries—Belgium, France, Austria and Italy—owe their origin and their prosperity to his untiring energy and self-denying charity.

After labouring for three or four years in Elberfeld, Father Kolping felt impelled to seek a new sphere of usefulness. On the death of one of the clergy attached to the Cathedral at Cologne, he sought and obtained the vacant post—the emolument of which was very small,—and set himself to grapple with the evil around him. At first he met with no success; the difficulties in his way seemed insuperable: he was single-handed and devoid of funds. But obstacles and difficulties only called out in him fresh resolution and greater activity. The seven artisans with whom he started a club multiplied so quickly that one room of meeting after another had to be abandoned for lack of space, until an imposing edifice was secured in the Breitestrasse, capable of accommodating more than five hundred members.

All this, and much more too, was accomplished in the course of one year; for the work excited great interest in Germany. Similar institutions were established in Berlin and other important cities; before three years had elapsed, ninety new foundations had been made. In 1850 the Rheinische Gesellenbund, or Confederation of Artisans for the Rhineland, was formally organized. The central house was at Cologne, where the president-general resided; each of the affiliated associations was presided over by a priest, the other officers being generally taken from the artisan class. Their duty was principally to see that the rules were strictly observed. A general congress was to be held annually in one or other of the principal towns.

Father Kolping beheld with joy and gratitude the marvellous success of the work he had inaugurated, and to which his life was devoted. His head-quarters were in Cologne, where in former years he patiently toiled at the shoemaker's bench, and where subsequently he laboured indefatigably for his beloved workmen and apprentices; but from time to time he visited other cities, to open a new club or address a meeting. The object he continually kept in view was the maintenance of unbroken union throughout the whole confederation; so that all the members, whatever the diversities of their nationality, their calling, or their character, should form one body, animated by one and the self-same spirit.

As the promotion of religion and piety among the working classes was the primary aim of the confederation, Father Kolping, in order to give it the character of a religious congregation, proposed, at the congress held in 1858, to divide it into ecclesiastical provinces, subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese, who should appoint a diocesan visitor. This plan was accepted, and received the episcopal sanction of the Bishop of Treves, the Archbishop of Cologne, and various other prelates. It was not carried out without opposition, however; and Father Kolping was for a time greatly discouraged. But he was consoled by the warm approval of the Holy Father, who sent his apostolic blessing to the association, and conferred on the presidents of several *cercles* substantial tokens of his favour. Moreover, Cardinal de Luca, the Apostolic Nuncio in Vienna, expressed his opinion that these Catholic associations of working men might render immense service to society, and further the pacific solution of the social question, reconciling, in a great measure, the conflicting interests of Capital and Labour by the cultivation of a spirit of charity, industry, and content.

It may perhaps appear almost incredible that one in Adolf Kolping's position—poor, friendless and unknown—should in so short a time have been able to

procure the funds necessary for the foundation and maintenance of institutions so numerous and on so large a scale. Christian charity supplied them all. Despite his humble origin, his shy and retiring character, never was there a man more skilful in pleading the cause he had at heart. He seemed to know by intuition how to choose the right moment, to touch the right chord, to urge the argument best calculated to impress the individual whose aid he solicited. Thus he never gave offence, and rarely failed to attain his object. Through his persuasive manner or some timely jest, he often cajoled—if we may use the word—wealthy persons into giving him surprisingly large sums; and, after a long quest, he would return home with his capacious pockets well filled with coin. Calling his secretary, he would smilingly take out handful after handful of shining thalers, among which pieces of gold were freely mixed; never resting till the smallest coin had been hunted out from its corner, and, always with some little joke, added to the heap upon the table. "There," he would finally exclaim,—"there is our fresh supply! How much there is God knows, and you soon will know; count it up and write it down. To-morrow we will see how much more we want."

In Cologne, where after a time everybody knew him, and he was familiarly designated as "Brother Deo Gratias," he obtained a footing in the following manner: Soon after his arrival there, when matters wore their most unpromising aspect, he made the acquaintance of a wealthy merchant, who took much interest in his scheme, and frequently checked his too ambitious designs. One day when Kolping was at the house of this friend, he showed him, with a piteous face, his empty pockets, saying that he did not possess a single cent wherewith to provide for himself or to prosecute his work. The merchant immediately rang the bell and ordered his carriage to be brought round. "Must you go out?" inquired Father Kolping, somewhat abashed; for he

imagined that he had mentioned his impecunious condition at an inopportune time. "Did you not say you were out of money?" rejoined his friend. "We will go out hunting together, and see if we cannot succeed in bringing down a few birds." Accordingly he drove round to the residences of his most opulent acquaintances, to whom he introduced Father Kolping, stating in a few words the object of his visit. The result was that Kolping went home that night with a considerable sum at his disposal.

The project this zealous labourer cherished most fondly was the erection of a hospice in Cologne, where journeymen employed in the town for a short period, or youths who were homeless, could lodge; or strangers, passing through in quest of work, could be housed for the night. He knew only too well how frequently men thus circumstanced were ruined by falling among bad companions or seeking shelter in houses of ill repute. Not until the year 1861 was he able to carry out this project. He then obtained possession of a small house situated in the immediate vicinity of the Breitestrasse, to be used provisionally until more suitable premises should be secured. Ever since 1850 he had been seeking a site for the purpose, but could not succeed in obtaining one from the municipality; at last he determined to sacrifice a portion of the garden in which the House of the Association stood. Plans were prepared—a fine building in Gothic style, with refectory, kitchens, and a vast hall on the ground floor, and in the upper stories a large number of sleeping apartments. The foundation stone was laid with great ceremony in 1864. Funds flowed in, and the work was pushed on with all possible vigour.

About this time Father Kolping's health began to cause serious concern to his friends. For some years past his strength had been gradually forsaking him; symptoms of consumption showed themselves, and he was forbidden to preach or speak in public. In the

spring of 1865 he was much worse, and advised to go to the seaside for several months. He was, however, able to attend the congress at Treves before returning to Cologne for the opening of the new hospice. On the very night of his arrival he was prostrated by an attack of fever, from which he felt certain he should never recover. The consolation of witnessing the realization of his dearest desire was not denied him: he rallied sufficiently to take part in the opening ceremonies, which were on a grand scale, representatives from all the *cercles* in the Rhine provinces, and from many more distant parts, having come to Cologne for the occasion. After Pontifical High Mass had been celebrated, the new building was solemnly blessed by the officiating prelate; and in the evening a festive meeting was held in the capacious hall, which had been painted and decorated with emblematic designs by the young workmen themselves in their free time. Suffering and enfeebled as he was, Father Kolping could not refrain from addressing a few words to his dear artisans, gathered around him in the new hospice for the first and last time,—words of fervent gratitude for the past, of heartfelt joy in the present, of strong hope for the future. Once more he earnestly exhorted them to avoid the paths of perdition, to persevere in the way of industry and virtue. Once more he repeated to them his favourite axioms: "Man is the maker of his own fortunes. What we sow in our youth we reap in our old age." When he had finished speaking he left the hall, never again to enter it alive.

After all hope of ultimate recovery was abandoned, and it became known that the end was fast approaching, it was most edifying to see, evening after evening, hundreds of young workmen assembled in the Franciscan church, praying for their beloved benefactor with the greatest fervour, to judge by the heartfelt manner in which they joined in the public prayers, almost shouting the responses to the Litany, emphasizing especially the

one wherein Our Lady is invoked as *Salus infirmorum*. Others lingered about the doors and corridors of the hospice, eagerly asking for tidings from the sick-chamber. "For their sakes I would willingly recover my health," Father Kolping remarked, when informed of the affectionate solicitude manifested on his behalf. "If I am still necessary, *non recuso laborem*. But the holy will of God be done! I submit to it in life or in death."

Father Kolping did not live to see his fifty-third birthday, the 8th of December. He breathed his last on the 4th of that month. Before night the hall of the new building was converted into a *chapelle ardente*. The walls were draped with black by loving hands; groups of exotics, lent by private persons, with tall tapers, were placed around the catafalque whereon was laid in state the body of Father Kolping, clad in sacerdotal vestments. On the following day a continuous stream of persons, residents in Cologne, passed through the spacious hall, anxious to pay their last tribute of respect to the departed, to give silent testimony of their regret at his loss. Bands of working men, dressed in black, many with tears running down their cheeks, stood round the door, awaiting their turn to gaze once more on the features of their beloved Father, and to kneel beside his venerated remains. Who amongst them failed to add to the prayer for the repose of his soul an earnest entreaty that he would continue to intercede for and watch over the associations he had founded?

At the funeral the demonstrations of respect and affection were still greater. Deputations from some three hundred associations, from different parts of Germany, attended the obsequies and followed the coffin to the grave. After these came all the members of the Cologne association, eight hundred in number; the parochial clergy; the different guilds of the city with their ensigns; several of the municipal authorities, and a vast concourse of townspeople of all classes and conditions.

"What will become of your work when you are taken from us?" was asked of Father Kolping during his last illness.—"What becomes of a young workman," he inquired with a smile, "when his father dies?"—"He is left an orphan," was the reply.—"Not so," he said: "he becomes a man, and learns to shift for himself."

Thus it was with the Gesellenbund. Its growth and development did not cease on the removal of the earthly parent to whom it owed its existence. More than twenty-five years have now elapsed since the Apostle of Working Men was laid to rest, but he still lives and energizes in the institutions he inaugurated,—institutions productive of incalculable benefit to religion and society. Great indeed will be the number of those who will one day rise up and call him blessed, acknowledging that it is to him that they owe the maintenance of their faith, and the preservation of their innocence.

# St. Margaret of Scotland.

(1047—1093).

By Mrs. MORGAN MORGAN.

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There is a grand, exultant procession of young men and maidens, old men and children, painted by the magic genius of Hippolyte Flandrin—ever sweeping onwards and upwards—on the walls of St. Vincent de Paul's Church in Paris. Ever upwards they march, on to their crowned Lord, Who, in His golden glory, beckons to them from the lofty chancel arch—on—to the Lord Who died for them, and in Whom they died, the centre of all their love, the goal of all their hopes,—they go. Some of those wondrously living groups, taken from every nation, of all ages, and of every rank, are kings and queens, "the nursing fathers and mothers of the Church." Amongst those, tall, and stately, and queen-like, just such as one fancies her to have been—is St. Margaret of Scotland, long the faithful wife, and, for a brief while, the widow, of King Malcolm Canmore, the third of his name.

## Margaret's Early Life.

It is long ago,—eight hundred and forty-seven years—and far away, in the mountain fastnesses of Hungary, that a first-born child, a fair little daughter, came to gladden the somewhat shadowed and certainly chastened hearts of Edward, a Saxon prince, and Agatha his wife, a scion of the royal houses of Germany and Hungary. Shadowed and chastened, because Edward was an exile, a prince unlawfully deprived of his birthright: and the very title by which he was known amongst men was that of "the stranger." Disinheritance and exile, and dependence on the bounty of others, even though they be the kindest and best of friends, are not cheering or exhilarating; and thus it was that the little Princess Margaret began her life and grew up in an atmosphere grey and clouded, though brightened by piety.

She was born to a better inheritance than that of royal birth and lineage, inasmuch as she belonged to a household of saints. Her mother was the kinswoman, niece, as it is believed, of St. Henry, Duke of Bavaria and Emperor of Germany; and her father had been reared in the holy home of King Stephen, Hungary's dearest and most honoured saint. To him Pope Sylvester gave a crown that has had many strange adventures, and is still one of the nation's most treasured possessions.

From her earliest infancy, the little daughter of the Saxon stranger must have heard of the doings and sayings of her holy "kinsmen in the skies;" and her own name must have been a constant reminder, in all its beautiful meanings, of "light" and "purity," and the loveliness of penitential tears. Doubtless, as she grew a little older, she loved to spell it out in the pages of her mother's illuminated missal, in that sweet story of the holy Gospel which the Church has long read on the day on which her holy memory is honoured and her intercessions invoked. And assuredly she was taught that every lovely meaning

of the name, everything truly "pearl-like," had been shown forth in the life and character of her patroness, St. Margaret of Antioch; and that she also must ever strive to overcome a dragon quite as real as that which was conquered by the holy virgin martyr, whose name she bore.

Two sisters, and a brother who came some time after the others, shared her nursery, and probably helped to imbue her with that grave sense of responsibility, and that carefulness to set a good example which seem to have been amongst her many marked characteristics. As far as we can judge from the somewhat scanty sources at our disposal, she was, as the common saying is "a born queen." Not only had she "greatness thrust upon her," she was truly "born great"—born with the ability to rule and govern, an ability rare in men, ten thousand times rarer in women. By the natural aspects of the country of her birth, she was unconsciously prepared for those of the land where she was to be queen, and where she was to die. Hungary and Scotland are both mountainous, and resemble each other in many of their natural features; more especially did they do so, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, when the latter country still had many large forests. The characteristics also of the Magyars, who still people Hungary, are very similar to those of their kinsmen in the great Celtic race, "the Scots" who came from Ireland, and whose descendants were yet, in St. Margaret's time, lingering in Dalriada and other parts. In many a Magyar noble whom she met in her father's little court, she saw a picture of her future husband, large-limbed, brawny-chested, Celtic Malcolm of the "Big Head," thickly laden with ruddy-hued locks.

The mode of life of the kings and nobles of any country, in those far-away centuries, was not calculated to keep children "childish." Boys were early trained to war and diplomacy: girls to simple surgery, and all healing arts; and when scarce out of the nursery then had to school themselves, under strictest supervision, to become wives and great dames, by exercise of "discretion" and

a modest severity of demeanour, that in these days might, not unjustly, be deemed to savour of prudery. Reading was a much more difficult art when the books were rare and in manuscript; yet, although many of the men of royal and noble birth never attempted to master the difficulty, the ladies of their households seem frequently to have been educated, many of them being able to write, as well as to read. Queen Margaret's reputation for learning stands so high, that undoubtedly she must have been early and carefully instructed, and at eleven or twelve years old, was probably as advanced, and almost as womanly, as girls of sixteen or seventeen in these modern days.

Margaret was about eleven or twelve when one of the greatest changes in her life occurred; indeed, perhaps, the most complete, if not the most important, that she ever experienced. Her father, after a long period of exile, so long that he had almost, if not entirely, forgotten his native land, was called to revisit it, and under the happiest possible auspices. No longer was he to be "the stranger," but in fact,—as he had always been by right,—"*Ætheling*," or the heir to the kingdom of that fair little Isle in the Northern seas, at that time governed by his uncle Edward, known in after years as "the Confessor." That saintly sovereign, having always, with his wife's consent, lived in holy virginity, desired a successor to his kingdom, and knew that in all justice, the heir could only be the long-exiled Edward; therefore, with the goodwill of his councillors, he sent messengers to Hungary to summon him and his family to his side. Very much does one wish that there were some records extant of that first of the only two voyages of our Saint's life. We can, however, easily picture to ourselves the surprised though never affrighted eyes, with which she gazed at scenes so new and unfamiliar. To a girl, born and bred in an inland mountainous country, the sea must have been the most wonderful of all the new sights, and, probably, from a merely physical point of view, the least appreciated; for in those days, a voyage on its waters was, even to noble

and wealthy people, attended by many positive hardships and dangers.

Margaret's own worldly position was, of course, considerably raised by the change in her father's condition; but probably the mode of her life in England was not very different from what it had been in Hungary, for the saintly Edward kept an austere court. Doubtless parents of high degree sought and obtained for their daughters the great privilege of being in "the following" or train of the Princess Agatha; and they, together with her own daughters, would live by rule, doing a great deal of embroidery under her eye and that of "the mother of the maidens," as the lady who was in charge of these maids of honour was styled; and some of them studying Latin and English, reading and writing, under the direction of one of the chaplains. Maidens of that period had but little society, and the festivities of such a household as Prince Edward's would have been to us tedious in the extreme. Occasionally its quiet was diversified by hawking, or by joining, either on horseback, or in a litter, in some stately civic procession. In the evenings, glee-men and wandering minstrels were sometimes admitted to the "ladies' bower," and perhaps Margaret and her young companions may now and then have danced, in stately and ceremonious fashion, with some guests of sufficient rank to be permitted that honour. Each morning, the whole household were wont to "prevent the dawn" by attendance at Mass, and we may be sure, judging from her after-life, that these holy hours were the happiest of St. Margaret's whole day. According to all her chroniclers, her intellectual powers were as exceptionally brilliant as her learning was unusual; and these must have brought her under the special notice of her great uncle, the king. He probably found pleasure in conversing with one in whom he could, perhaps, foresee the dawning of that lovely sanctity of soul which was eventually to place her on the great roll-call of the Saints of God. Yet in his deep humility he little guessed that his example and wise and holy talk were aiding to train and mould her for that more than royal destiny.

High indeed had been the hopes with which Prince Edward and his family had taken up their abode in England, but they were all overthrown by his death. It has always seemed strange that, on losing this heir of his own and his people's choice, King Edward the Confessor did not vigorously assert the claims of the son of that heir. On the contrary, Edward began at once to turn his thoughts towards the Norman Court, in which he had himself been educated, and sought there for his successor. Her father's death, and the gradually lowered position of her young brother, were the first personal sorrows that befel Margaret; and as saints have a keener sense of pain and grief than have others less holy, these first proofs of her high calling must have been deeply and acutely felt. Not long after the loss of her father, Margaret was called upon to bear that of her great uncle and all the troubles and anxieties of the troublous and stormy period that followed upon his death. Amongst its many other effects it had that of throwing her and her family again upon the world as exiles and strangers. England could no longer be a safe home for them, and Princess Agatha, in all prudence, prepared to withdraw them from it. It used to be believed that this widowed lady began her voyage with the intention of returning to Hungary, and that the ship was wrecked on the eastern coast of Scotland, where the unfortunate voyagers were enthusiastically sheltered by its King, who instantly, upon seeing her, fell in love with the elder daughter of the Princess, the fair Margaret.

The romance of the story has always pleased, and has led to its being longer accepted as true than its real claim justified. Modern research—especially the investigations of Professor Freeman, the greatest authority on the history of the period—has taught us that Princess Agatha set out from England with the intention of going to Scotland, and of throwing herself on the protection of King Malcolm. It is possible that she may have even formed the idea of a union between him and her beautiful elder daughter. There seems also to be reason for much doubt as to whether a shipwreck

really occurred. However, the facts that the voyagers had to walk from the part of the coast where they landed, towards Dunfermline, and that the Scottish King had to hasten to meet them on the way, show at least a probability of such a misfortune having befallen them. If it did, it must have greatly aided in the accomplishment of Princess Agatha's wishes. For, to a fervid, and generous nature, in all its points, both good and evil, essentially manly, such as King Malcolm's was, the trouble of the fair young Margaret must, in his eyes, have heightened her numerous attractions. One thing at least, is certain, the Scottish King took the whole party at once to his own castle, or "Tower," as it was called, the only palace he at that time possessed; and entertained them there for many months. There were several points of similarity between Malcolm's history and that of St. Margaret's father; for he too had, in his youth, been exiled, and disinherited by the usurper Macbeth. That prince, had, however, done much to consolidate the Kingdom of Scotland; so that when Malcolm Canmore came to the throne, he was more completely king, than any of his predecessors had been, and he ruled over a larger portion of the country. Still, and indeed for long after his time, the influence of some of the chieftains was so powerful, and the extent of their lands so great, that, in reality, if not in name, there were many kings ruling at one and the same time in Scotland.

## Margaret's Marriage: her Homes in Scotland.

Dunfermline is, at the present day, one of the most attractive towns in Scotland. The modern buildings are solid and handsome; the surrounding scenery is beautiful, and the ruins of palace and monastery, and the ancient yet well-preserved portions of the noble parish church, are all full of interest to lovers of history and archæology. The place is haunted by many and interesting associations with days long gone by. The heart of "the Bruce" was buried in that great church; and poor sorrow-laden Charles the First was born in

the ivy-mantled ruin that hangs above a deep-sunken and noisily-brawling burn. But to nearly every visitor the most interesting of the memories are those connected with St. Margaret, who is specially dear to the Scottish people, strangely and remarkably so, considering that alas! they are not one with her in Faith. Yet even the most rigid Presbyterians honour her, and though the Apostles are too often spoken of by their unprefixed names, this holy Queen is generally styled St. Margaret. The Dunfermline townsfolk point with pride to the traces of her life and work yet to be found in the midst of their flourishing, little mercantile town. The relic most prized of all being the small cave hidden away in the depths of a long, wooded "den" that, itself unseen if unsought, lies actually in the very heart of the busy town.

A truly unique and romantic feature is this den, and, whilst threading the winding paths leading to its depths, the visitor is being prepared to feel and enjoy, to its full, the holy charm of the narrow, low-browed cave which reliable tradition says, good Queen Margaret frequently used as a private oratory. It could be reached by ways, steeper and more winding than they are even now, from the Tower which was her first home in Scotland, but of which nothing now remains. There are, however, pictures of this building, three or four centuries ago. It was not a palatial abode, only a square, not to say ugly tower, standing on a raised peninsula formed by the curves of the burn; and, by natural position, a safe shelter in wild and lawless times. We have reason to believe that to St. Margaret it was a blissful abode; for there she was wooed and won by a faithful and loving heart, although it beat in a rugged and uncouth frame. Malcolm was much older than the fair Saxon Princess, and was, indeed, a widower; but he loved her devotedly, and she returned his affection, giving him all wifely duty, which was alike prompted and sanctified by the higher and deeper love she ever bore to her heavenly Lord and King.

In those days, and especially under such careful rule as that of the Princess Agatha, there were few opportuni-

ties for love-making and courtship in their more modern acceptation ; still, as Malcolm and Margaret lived in the same house together for several months before their marriage, they must have had more chances of seeing each other than commonly fell to the lot of even betrothed lovers at that date. They met at his hospitable board, where, no doubt, he delighted to show her all possible honour ; and, probably, he often led her by the hand on her progress to hear Mass, at which the whole household daily assisted, either in the small and very humble Culdee church outside the Tower gates ; or, in the even smaller chapel within its precincts. Of course, he often heard of her sweet kindnesses to some sick child or slave in the establishment, and witnessed her charities to the beggars that daily thronged the outer court of the castle. Thus the first winter in the bleak, unkindly Scottish clime was gilded and lighted up for Margaret with a gladness which the saintliness of her heart kept pure of all alloy, and which she could as truly offer up to God, as she had done her previous sorrows and anxieties.

In the early spring following the landing in Scotland, the royal pair were married ; and Margaret immediately threw herself into all the manifold duties incumbent upon a wife, who was also the consort sovereign of a wild and turbulent people. The change of their home and capital to Edinburgh must, we think, be attributed to St. Margaret's prudence and wise prescience. Malcolm Canmore was the first of the Scottish kings to make the little burgh of St. Edwin, the chief seat of the kingdom ; and yet it was pre-eminently fitted by nature to be such. The lofty, beetling craig rising abruptly out of the plain, absolutely precipitous on all sides save one, and that a not too gentle slope, was the very site for a watch-tower above the danger-haunted forests, where roamed the wild white bull and the tawny wolf, the tusked boar and the antlered stag. It was close to a river, and within a short distance of a wide arm of the sea, whilst various ranges of distant hills protected it from the too frequent incursions of the wild tribes inhabiting their

fastnesses. Many are the poetic and romantic legends concerning this giant craig. It must suffice to say that the earliest known fortress thereon was called the Maiden's Castle, which title it bore long after the little hamlet of lowly thatched cottages, nestling under its shelter on the only sloping ridge of the hill, had become known as "Edwin's Burgh." It owed that name to Edwin, the saintly chief or prince of Northumbria, in which province "the Lothians" were in his time, and long after, included.

Malcolm, guided probably by Margaret, began to realize all the advantages and adaptabilities of the place for a capital; and thither they removed about two years after their marriage, and there they thenceforth chiefly lived; although their love for their first home at Dunfermline was strongly evidenced by founding there of the beautiful Priory and its noble Church dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity. Two little churches were then in the Queen's new abode, one dedicated to St. Cuthbert which stood on the castle slopes within the "burgh," the other to St. Giles, at its foot at the entrance to the forest; but each of these was rather distant for the daily worship of herself and her numerous following. She therefore caused to be built on the summit of the craig, and within the fortress, a church of stone; which, judging from the apsidal chancel, all that now remains, must have seemed beautiful in comparison with the two we have named, which were of wattled sticks lined with heather and dried moss, having low-pitched roofs of thatch.

After the Queen's canonization, this Church of her building was called St. Margaret's in her honour, but its previous dedication I have failed to discover. Possibly it might have been to her own patroness, St. Margaret of Antioch; but more probably it was to St. Katharine of Alexandria, to whom she had a special devotion easily to be accounted for. There was much in common in their circumstances and characters; both were royal, and exceptionally learned, and of rare mental ability. The remembrance of the Scottish Queen's

affection for the royal virgin martyr is still kept alive by the name of a well in Edinburgh; and by the legend which hovers around it, and from which nineteenth century scepticism cannot take all the supernatural element. The story is that Margaret, wishing much for some of the holy oil in St. Katharine's keeping on Mount Sinai, earnestly prayed that she might have her desire. And it was granted to her. Either St. Katherine herself, or some living nun bearing her name and commissioned by her—it does not seem quite clear which—set out with the precious treasure, and conveyed it safely until within a mile or two of Edinburgh, when she accidentally dropped the vessel; and from the poured-out contents sprang a well, having on its surface the floating oil. Many flocked thither, and those who were diseased found healing by drinking of the water, or washing in it. James the Sixth, on a visit to Scotland, after he had inherited the crown of England, had this well, which after the so-called Reformation had become neglected, properly repaired, railed in, and provided with steps whereby persons might with ease descend to obtain the water, in the healing properties of which he, at least, believed. The well, as he repaired and beautified it, still exists, and a black bituminous substance floats on the surface of its waters.

Though very probably to our modern ideas, Malcolm may have had much of the savage in him, he was, as has been observed of many an actual savage of royal and noble blood in distant, uncivilized lands, one of "nature's gentlemen" and instinctively a lover of the beautiful. Thus it was that he rejoiced—so we are told by St. Margaret's faithful chronicler—to see a court circle gathering round his wife as its gracious head and centre, and herself, the source of the politeness that the rough nobles began to imbibe and gradually in some degree to imitate.

We are informed that the Queen was particular as to ceremonial, and that her own apparel was always rich even to sumptuousness. This must have been entirely from a sense of duty, and her judgment of what was

was fitting to enhance the honour of her husband; and as a means of winning due respect for his high office and hers. Undoubtedly she was of the opinion which Shakespeare five centuries later put into words: "Such divinity doth hedge a king."

At her first banquets she had been much distressed by the rude haste with which at their close the nobles rushed away, not waiting to return thanks, or, as the phrase was then and is now, to "say grace." Margaret's desire was that Almighty God should be duly reverenced and praised; but she did not deem it wrong to use quite human means to bring about that good desire. She begged the nobles not to retire from the banquets until the chaplain had returned thanks, as she wished that immediately after his doing so, they should all drink a last cup sent from her own board in her honour. The nobles could not refuse this flattering request of their beautiful young Queen, and the cup was ever after known as the Grace Cup, and was used in Scotland at public and private repasts long after the pious originator of the custom had passed to heaven.

Even in Queen Margaret's own apartments, there could have been little of luxury, little even of mere comfort, according to our modern ideas of either; and yet there, doubtless, was the best "plenishing" to be found in the kingdom. Fresh and clean instead of dirt-begrimed rushes were spread on her floor, and tapestry hangings, worked by herself and her many maidens, clothed some at least of the rough walls.

A few panes of glass, thick and green-hued, diamond or quarrel-shaped, filled some of the narrow windows, and were so few, and so great a luxury, that they were carried about with her from one home to another. She loved her books, and one of Malcolm's "gentlest" kindnesses was shown in secretly taking away some of these, in order to return them to her sumptuously bound and adorned with jewels. It must be remembered that the Gaels who came from Dalriada (Antrim), had brought with them wondrous skill in the binding of books, as well as in the carving of stone, and the cutting and polishing

of jewels. She had a book of the Gospels richly illuminated, its cover laden with gold and precious gems; and this she ever carried with her. One day an attendant while crossing a ford let it fall unwittingly into the stream. There it lay a long time till it was known to be missing and search was made; and there at last it was discovered. But though the swift current had washed away the silk which protected the painted pages, not a mark was seen upon them save on the very edges of the leaves.

It is with good reason believed that Margaret accompanied her husband in some of his royal progresses, and about one of these journeys there has come down, through the ages, a very pretty story. When Margaret left Hungary for England, there was in their train a certain young noble, by name Bartholomew, or Bartulf. It is supposed that he was about the same age as Margaret, as far as was possible in those times of demure manners, a playfellow of herself and her sisters in earliest childhood, and as time went on, more fittingly, a companion of the one son of the house. He was evidently a faithful friend and servant; for he accompanied them also to Scotland, and was appointed the Queen's Lord Chamberlain. He had the honour of carrying the Queen on his own horse when she travelled. For ease, a pad behind the Chamberlain was provided for the Queen, for safety a belt buckled round his waist supplied her with a support in case of danger. On one occasion, when both thus mounted were crossing a river, the Queen nearly fell from the horse. On this, the Chamberlain, in great anxiety, called out "Grip fast," to which the Queen replied, "Gin the buckle bide." When the pair safely reached the opposite bank, the Queen asked the king to bid Bartulf add a "buckle" to the family arms of his house, to which had already been given broad lands, and the name of Lesley. A pretty ending to the pretty story is the fact that this Bartulf married the king's sister; and one cannot help thinking that the Queen's kindly ministrations must have been at work to bring about that event.

With all her great kindliness and charity of spirit, she was somewhat austere in manner, and it is said that she kept very strict rule amongst her young maidens and bower women. It is also known from various chroniclers that she requested the governors and preceptors of her children never to spare the rod when their faults required such chastisement; that indeed she did not herself abstain from the use of it for her little daughters. Lest this may shock some readers, it must be remembered that the age in which Margaret lived was not a tender or sentimental one, and that then, and for centuries later, it was considered the absolute duty of Christian parents to use the rod, and that it was inflicted almost like a religious ceremony upon even the good and dutiful children. And this not merely for the sake of punishment; but also in order to accustom them to endure hardships as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and to train them thereby to the after use, for themselves, of those bodily mortifications and discipline both of the flesh and the spirit, which were then, and as we must hope are still, considered essential aids in the perfecting of the Christian life. There never yet was a saint who did not use them in some form or other; certainly, Margaret was no exception to that general rule. This thought naturally brings us to the contemplation of Margaret's life from the purely spiritual point of view, and to the endeavour to realize and appreciate those proofs of personal holiness which won her the title of a saint in the Church of God.

## Signs of Margaret's Holiness.

When we think about saints, and more especially when we humbly venture to write about them, we ought to be careful not to think of them only as men and women; nor merely of their human relationships and natural characteristics; but above all to remember that they of whom we are thinking are *saints*. We should dwell very much and very earnestly upon those supernatural graces which caused them to be chosen by God to "stand ever in His sight," and to pour forth before

Him "the odours" which are their prayers for the suffering warring Church below. Thoughts of our intercessors in these aspects, though they will certainly make us very humble, need not make us unhappy; for far removed as we are at present from their likeness, we know that we can, and may become even as they were and are, if we use the same means that they used; if we have the same faith, and if *we* also "resist unto blood, striving against sin."

We have been thinking and writing of Saint Margaret as daughter and wife, as mother and mistress, as lady and queen; and such thoughts are full of interest because in each of those relationships she was admirable; but it is time to consider the sources which made her so admirable in them all,—those interior graces which made her specially dear to God and truly a "lady elect."

In common with all the saints, for no creature, from our Lady downwards, could be a saint without it, love was the underlying principle of all her holiness. Love to our Lord and God is shown by obedience, humility, constancy in prayer, fervour in worship, and perpetual dedication of every thought, word, and deed to His glory. Love to man is shown by active work in behalf of the poor, the sick, and the suffering, and in never-failing succour of the helpless and friendless. Of this a full account will be found in the larger life of her, taken from the records of her faithful chronicler and confessor, Prior Turgot.

Before five in the morning, were it summer or winter, she washed, and dressed and fed nine little infant orphans. These she handled with that infinite tenderness that only the very strong, the truly "valiant," woman can show. She distributed food and alms to three hundred persons of both sexes, and afterwards waited on twenty-four poor people at an abundant meal; and in this part of her pious work, the king often aided her. After an interval, in which she heard three Masses, she broke her fast with a scanty meal. When this was done it was her daily custom to spend some hours in receiving petitions, and in hearing the complaints

of any who believed themselves to have been wronged, either by the public officers of the law or by private individuals. She was in the habit of sending trusty agents into various parts of Scotland to search out for cases of distress, and hearing their reports occupied a portion of her busy day. Likewise, she had a most tender pity for slaves, and would send far and near on the chance of ransoming any. A portion of the Castle buildings was set apart as a nursery for the orphan children, and another part was used as an infirmary, filled chiefly with those who suffered from loathsome sores and foul diseases of the skin, and these the Queen tended with her own hands, dressing their sores, and alleviating their pain.

Good St. Margaret's benefactions to the Church singly, and in conjunction with the King, were great; witness the princely endowments at Dunfermline, and the restorations at Iona. She gave rich and costly altar vessels and adornments to Holy Trinity Church in Dunfermline, and to her oratory in Edinburgh Castle. She and Malcolm also founded a small hospice in Rome for the entertainment of Scottish pilgrims.

Such were the outer signs of her saintliness, but we must turn to her "soul's friend," (such was the beautiful Saxon term for a confessor) to learn what he could feel himself justified to tell of the deeper, the almost hidden sanctity that was the root and spring of all this fair and open benevolence. She was implicitly obedient to the one who was God's representative to her soul. At her earliest elevation to the Scottish throne, she had been impressed by all she heard of Turgot, the Prior of St. Andrews, formerly of St. Cuthbert's monastery at Durham, and begged him to come to be the chaplain of the Palace and her spiritual Director. She implored him to be severe in correcting her faults, and ever to regard her rather as his penitent than as his queen. In every detail of her spiritual life, she followed his guidance, save that sometimes he would fain have had her moderate the severity of her penances, even though he did not absolutely forbid them, because he saw that they

were aiding largely in the great work of her sanctification. She might, indeed, wear sumptuous garments, richly embroidered, and brilliant with jewels; but the coarse sack-cloth and the iron girdle were almost always beneath them. She rose many times in a night in order to use the discipline with pitiless severity; and would lie upon the hard stone floor of her chamber until implored by the King to return to her bed. Her fasts were severe, and at all times, her abstemiousness was almost like ordinary person's fasts, and to such an excess did she carry this special mortification, that her health suffered, and at last, in the pangs of what proved to be her mortal disease, she was compelled somewhat to abate its severity. Nor was the fasting or the lacerating of the flesh unaccompanied by prayer. To her these were but the means towards attaining to a greater fervour of devotion, a ceaseless worship; and even the devotion itself was but the means towards the ultimate object, the gaining more love for God. By a curious mistake, Shakespeare, in his tragedy of *Macbeth*, says of Malcolm's mother what was most evidently a true description of that King's wife:

> "The Queen, . . . .
> Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
> Died every day she lived."

Who but Shakespeare of all uninspired writers could have so tersely, and so beauteously expressed the perfection of the Christian course,—a daily dying unto sin, and a living again unto righteousness; and so dying, and so living, because being always in prayer, "oftener on the knees than on the feet."

And what were the channels whereby her great devotion was conveyed to its divine object and source? They were much fewer than those which are open to us. Her aids to worship were fewer, but not in any degree smaller than ours. She had, as we have, with but some verbal differences and some slight details of ceremonial, the sublimely beautiful liturgy of the Mass.

Around the offering of the Sacrifice of the Mass, all her devotion gathered as to its centre. We may be quite sure that she never assisted at the great mystery without gaining some fresh grace, some added strength; and, so would it be with us if we assisted thereat with her depth of faith, her height of hope, and her fervour of love.

She was by no means lonely, but had invisible companionhip, and doubtless the spirit of contentment made her feel herself rich indeed; and yet even we with all our overflowing privileges of every possible sort and description, and with "an innumerable cloud of witnesses" ever hovering around us, sometimes fancy ourselves poor, and bewail our solitude!

That the Queen had a powerfully intellectual mind, and an ability for logical reasoning far above that of her sex in general, is evidenced by the records of her discussions with the leaders of the Culdee Church, and by the impression she left upon its newer development, in the change of certain rubrical laws and ceremonial customs into an account of which we have not space to enter. It would seem that our loved Queen Margaret seldom showed a truer sign of her saintship than when, sitting in council with ecclesiastics and laymen, her own husband amongst them, she bared her heart sufficiently to allude to her penitential exercises in the Lenten preparation for Easter Communion. Every northern mind, steeped instinctively in reticence as to the deepest emotions, can appreciate what it must have cost the woman thus to do her duty as queen, and as a nursing mother of the Church.

Nor was there wanting to her the sign of God's servants,—the sign of suffering. At the first glance, Margaret's life from the time of her entrance into Scotland, seems to have been more than ordinarily happy and prosperous. It is true that there was a whole class of sorrows, and those the most embittering of all, that never touched her. She never suffered the misery of estrangement from those she loved: never had cause to use the touching prayer given in the intention of the Apostleship of Prayer—"grant us the grace

not to be discouraged by the desertion of friends." She had an adoring husband, dutiful children, an affectionate brother, an admiring court. She had a spiritual father, as tender as he was firm, as gentle and loving as he was judicious, and who was always at her side to warn, to admonish, and to comfort. Some of us think, and not unjustly, that the possession of any one of these blessings, all of which were hers, would constitute a sufficiently happy life; and undoubtedly, in all those respects, hers was such.

Once indeed a touch of slander, which is often "an inheritance of the saints," breathed on even that fair mirror of womanhood. Malcolm, who, as we have said before, was more than half but a reclaimed savage, and not altogether unlike the Moor as pourtrayed by our inimitable dramatist, had some Iago to whisper some evil word of suspicion concerning even this best and purest of wives; for there is extant, a story, apparently too true, of his fancying some harmful purpose in her frequent secret visits to her oratory cave in the sunken and wooded depths of that "Wooer's Alley," as that long, romantic glen is now called. One day he stealthily followed her thither, all his angry passions aroused. The sight he saw on peering through the narrow window sent him inside, to fall on his knees beside the sweet Saint he had momentarily wronged and to implore Heaven's pardon and hers.

The constant disappointments of her only brother, and his homelessness, save for her own and her husband's hospitality, must have been a severe trial to Queen Margaret, herself a sovereign, and one who attached much importance to the externals of royalty. The uncivilized condition of her kingdom and its constant harassment by war were grievous to her. It must be remembered that her exiled father had known no more of war than what was taught to every man of noble and princely birth, and practised in friendly tournaments. He had had no experience in generalship on an actual "tented field." St. Edward the Confessor loathed the thought of warfare. Thus, not having been "to the

manner born," it was probably a trial to even a naturally brave spirit like hers to live in the midst of continual petty skirmishes, and of sudden raids and forays, and to feel that at any moment her nearest and dearest might be brought home to her with the life crushed out of his stalwart frame. The state of Margaret's own health must for several years have been a heavy sorrow, though one always fought against, and probably deemed, by so white a soul, to be a fault. She was made perfect in a short time, for, when scarcely past the prime of life, the end came, and, even if her earthly career had been ever prosperous, which, as we have seen, it was not, yet many a bitter woe was crowded into its latest days. She parted from husband, brother and son, with the prescience often given to the saints, that the parting would be final. There were anxiety and suspense, ending in all too certain knowledge of double bereavement coming to her in the very hour of death, and a death from an exquisitely painful internal disease. Sweet Saint! surely the sign-manual of the King of Sorrows—the "One acquainted with grief"—was not wanting to thee; no token of thy holiness was missing!

## Last Hours of the Saint.

Malcolm had often had wars with William the Conqueror, and had as often made a transient peace. Generally, the rights of poor, landless, disinherited Edgar, the Ætheling, were the ostensible cause; but sometimes they arose to avenge a raid of one or other monarch upon the lands of his too near neighbour. About the origin of the last battle in which Malcolm ever engaged, which was with William Rufus, there are many diverse statements. But one thing appears certain, and that is, that the Queen was peculiarly averse from her husband leaving her, because of her strange foresight of the fatal ending of the battle. Nevertheless, she herself embroidered his banner, and was at the Castle gates to bid him farewell, and to give her solemn and tender motherly blessing to the sons who were to accompany him.

St. Margaret was in sore ill-health at the time, and shortly after, she became much worse, yet each day, she dragged herself to the chapel to hear Mass, finding in the Holy Sacrifice, as all tried and heavy-laden souls do, her greatest strength, her only sure comfort. In the chapel and out of it her prayers were constant, and, according to the testimony of her faithful confessor, her patient endurance of both mental and bodily pain was a truly wonderful thing to witness. The season of the year was not one calculated to raise the spirits of a sorrowful invalid.

November on the eastern coast of Scotland, and in Edinburgh specially, is apt, at its very best, to be trying, and its very best is, when there is only a fog, or only sharp winds. But when both come together, when the keen, cutting wind blows straight down from the Pentlands, and the fog rises from the Frith shrouding the Castle with wreaths of white mist, then indeed the dreariness is a thing to be felt, a pain that eats into the soul as well as the body, a weight almost tangible, which even the blithest spirit is powerless to thrust aside. Weather such as this, prevailed, we are told, on the 16th of November, 1093, just eight hundred years ago, and poor Queen Margaret, becoming suddenly much worse when in chapel, had to rise from her devotions, and be supported to her own chamber. There as soon as possible, her maids and her children, and her faithful friend, Prior Turgot, were around her couch. Many of the company wept bitterly; St. Margaret bade them not lament for her, as she was fast going whither she had long hoped to be. Then she turned to her confessor, and earnestly begged him to guard and watch over her little children, to bring them up in the fear of the Lord, and to teach them, above all, to resist the sins of pride and of rebellion against His holy will. She was holding in her hand the famous Relic Cross, well known as the Black Rood of Scotland, and was silently following the chaplain's prayers. All was stillness save for the softly-dropping words of supplication, and the smothered sobs of the maidens and the little children.

But suddenly and distressfully was that holy stillness broken. The bugle note of the Royal House was heard outside the gates, and the answering blast of the warder's horn.

Fain would all in the room have kept those sounds from the dying Queen; but the ear that had often listened anxiously for the royal signal, knew it only too well, and she commanded that the messenger, whoever he might be, should immediately be brought to her side. She did not seem to imagine for a moment that it might be the king himself, but she hoped for one of her sons, who came, travel-stained and weary as he was, and knelt by her bed. If he could, he would have concealed his sad tidings, but his mother adjured him, by the holy Rood she held, to tell her all the truth. "I know that your father is dead, but what of my elder son, and my brother?" "Your father is safe," was the reply; "but your son, alas, lies with our father." As he spoke, the poor boy, for he was only that, sank down exhausted with sorrow and fatigue. "Then the Saint," says Prior Turgot, lifted up her eyes and hands towards heaven, and exclaimed: "Praise and blessing be to Thee, Almighty God, that Thou hast been pleased to make me endure so bitter an anguish in the hour of my departure, thereby, as I trust, to purify me in some measure from the corruption of my sins; and Thou, Lord Jesu Christ, Who, through the Will of the Father, hast redeemed the world by Thy death, O deliver me!"

Whilst pronouncing the words, "Deliver me," she expired. Truly, she who "had died whilst she lived," now lived for ever in her dying.

Scarcely had the Queen expired, when the castle was besieged by the wild and lawless brother of the late king, and all was misery and confusion. The faithful Prior Turgot contrived to get the children conveyed out of the castle by a postern gate, unknown to Donald Bane, the wicked uncle who was their besieger, and who would have slain them could he have got them into his power. Turgot himself, by that same postern, aided by a few

followers, almost as equally devoted as he, reverently carried the body of the beloved dead to Queensferry, and from thence to "Dunfermline in the wood," where it lay until the so-called Reformation, when a portion of it was secretly conveyed to the College of Douay, and another to the Escurial, the vast palace and monastery which Philip II of Spain erected near Madrid. Scottish Catholics feared that she, who had once been so loved and honoured by the Scottish people, would have been treated by the Calvinists with contumely.

So much loved and honoured had she been, that successive generations of the people cried aloud for her canonization. They were in the habit of invoking her prayers, and blazoning abroad the miracles performed at her tomb, long before the Church placed her on the roll-call of her saints. This was done by Pope Innocent the Third, in 1251. Many churches were built in her honour in Scotland, and in places where Scots were wont to congregate; and even now, as we remarked before, her memory is cherished, and her name is still the favourite for female children throughout Scotland. Those Scots who love Scotland best, earnestly hope and pray that the prayers of this most popular of her Saints may yet be the means of winning the nation back to that Faith by which alone such a character could have been trained and perfected.

It is naturally a matter of regret that no portrait of St. Margaret, taken in her lifetime, has ever been found, and that, what pictures there are of her, are purely imaginary. The picture above the altar dedicated to her honour in the Scots' College in Rome, the work of an unknown Polish artist of the last century, in its delicate refinement, and queenly graciousness, comes much nearer to it; but apart from any interest of other associations therewith, it is a far less lovely presentment of her than the one in Hippolyte Flandrin's grand procession of the "Church of the First-born," of the innumerable cloud.

A beautiful miniature copy of the altar-piece in the Scots' College is said to be much cherished by

the Holy Father, to whom it was presented in the year of his priestly jubilee. It is well known that he has a strong and tender affection for those whom he calls "his faithful Scots;" and, doubtless, he often entreats that St. Margaret's prayers may aid in bringing about the much to be desired day, when all the true and loving hearts in that nation will be one in Christ, and faithful children of His Church.